

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Weequahic High School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 279 Chancellor Avenue☐ not for publicationcity or town Newark City☐ vicinitystate New Jerseycode NJCounty Essexzip code 07112

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this ☒ nomination☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy SHPO, Assistant Commissioner for Community Investment & Economic Revitalization

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

- ☐ removed from the National
Register.

- ☐ other, (explain:) _____

Lisa Delina4/11/2024

Name of Property

County and State

Ownership of Property

☐ private

☒ public-local

☐ public-State☐ public-Federal☐ building(s)

☐ district

□ site

□ structure

□ object

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Historic Functions

EDUCATION – school

RECREATION AND CULTURE – mural

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION – school

RECREATION AND CULTURE – mural

Architectural Classification

ART DECO

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

Brick

walls

Brick

roof

Steel, Synthetic

other

Limestone, Terra Cotta, Aluminum, Copper

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8 Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria considerations

(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ART

Period of Significance

1932-1958

Significant Dates

1932-33

1939

1958

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Guilbert and Betelle

Lenson, Michael (W.P.A. muralist)

Primary location of additional data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: Newark Board of Education

Weequahic High School

Name of Property

Essex County, NJ

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 3.04

Latitude / Longitude Coordinates

(Note to Preparers: NJ HPO will complete this portion of the Registration Form for all Preparers, based on the coordinates derived from the Site Map or District Map that HPO produces.)

1. Lat	40.709923	Long	-74.220602
2. Lat	40.709887	Long	-74.220198
3. Lat	40.709341	Long	-74.219207
4. Lat	40.708674	Long	-74.219799
5. Lat	40.709257	Long	-74.221156

(NJ HPO will place additional coordinates, if needed, on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet for Section 10.)

Boundary Justification Statement

(Explain, on the section sheet following the Verbal Boundary Description, how the chosen boundaries meet the requirements for boundary selection and are the most appropriate boundaries for the nominated property or district.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carly Adler, Rachel Craft and Patrick Harshbarger, Architectural Historians

organization Hunter Research, Inc.

date July 2023

street & number 120 West State Street

telephone 609-695-0122

city or town Trenton

state NJ

zip code 08608

Additional Documentation

(Submit the additional items with the completed form that are outlined in the "Standard Order of Presentation" that NJ HPO provides. Each page must contain the name of the nominated property or district, and the State and the county in which the property or district is located. Consult with NJ HPO if you have questions.)

Property Owner

(Either provide the name and address of the property owner here or provide the information separately to NJ HPO. Check with NJ HPO for other requirements. All owners' names and addresses must be provided, including public and non-profit owners, but their presence on the form, itself, is not required).

name Newark Board of Education

street & number 765 Broad Street

telephone 973-733-7333

city or town Newark

state NJ

zip code 07102

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. The proper completion of this form and the related requirements is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Direct questions regarding the proper completion of this form or questions about related matters to the Registration Section, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail code 501-04B, PO Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625-0420.

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7. Description

Summary

Weequahic High School, built in 1932-33, is a remarkably intact example of the Art Deco style applied to a large public high school in an urban setting. The substantial building, as designed with 125 classrooms, has a roughly rectangular footprint of approximately 330-feet wide by 200-feet deep. It stands four-stories tall and eleven-bays wide on the south-facing façade. Common in Art Deco architecture, the school has sweeping vertical lines formed by a prominent central entrance tower and four corner stairwells. The primary exterior material is buff-colored brick, which varies from an off-white to tan-colored hue, accented by carved limestone, cast stone and white-glazed terra cotta, typical of the creamy color palette often favored by architects working in the Art Deco style. A symmetrical grid of classroom windows separated by fluted pilasters and multiple brick stringer courses creates a repeating grid of visual interest. Characteristic Art Deco ornamentation includes ziggurat-inspired forms, curvilinear and geometric terra-cotta flora and fauna motifs in low relief, and decorative iron and copper grille work. The floor plan is centered around an impressive Art Deco-style auditorium with original plaster friezes, wrought-iron and frosted-glass light fixtures, aluminum ventilation grilles and wood seating with decorative cast-iron legs. A hallway system with an efficient, rectangular, circulatory plan provides access to classrooms on every floor, as well as the auditorium, two gymnasiums and library/media center. One of Weequahic High School's outstanding delights is a Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) mural entitled "The Enlightenment of Man," which was designed for the building and installed in the central lobby by artist Michael Lenson in 1939. A minor addition to raise the rear of the building from three to four floors was anticipated in 1932 and finally constructed in 1958 to provide added classroom capacity per the original plans. Weequahic High School is in very good condition and has had no major alterations to the features that define it as an urban school of the second quarter of the 20th century in the Art Deco style. Weequahic High School retains each of the seven aspects of integrity.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting – Weequahic High School is located on the northern side of Chancellor Avenue in the Weequahic neighborhood of the City of Newark in Essex County, New Jersey.¹ The building fronts Chancellor Avenue on a corner lot bounded by Aldine Street at the east, Vassar Avenue at the north, and the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School at the west (Photographs 1-4). The high school is oriented to the street grid with its main entrance and front façade facing south and set back from Chancellor Avenue by 90 feet. The east elevation is set back from Aldine Street by 80 feet. The high school is prominently situated near the crown of a low hill, gradually sloping southeast. The level of the ground at the west end of the high school is about 10 feet higher than the ground at the east end. The school is positioned well above the grade of the streets, which accentuates

¹ The word "Weequahic" came into local usage in the late 19th century to describe a neighborhood in the southwest section of the City of Newark near Essex County parkland established as Weequahic Park in 1896. The park's name was influenced by local historians who at the time were promoting a narrative that colonial Newark's Puritan founders had existed peacefully and in cooperation with local Lenni Lenape tribes. They thought that "Weequahic" was a Lenape word that had once referred to a body of water near the park.

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its architectural prominence in a neighborhood mostly characterized by single-family dwellings on smaller urban lots. The setting is urban residential with commercial properties along Chancellor Avenue to the east and west. Weequahic High School's city block is devoted to public educational uses and in addition to the high school contains only the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School and a shared football field and athletics center, both to the west of the high school.²

Weequahic High School's perimeter contains sidewalks along the street frontages, and lawns to the south, east and north of the building, per original landscaping as shown in period photographs. The west side of the building is separated from the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School by a narrow, concrete-paved alley. The front-facing façade (south) is shaded by a number of mature trees (oak, maple and London plane), most of which appear to be over 50 years of age and in some instances may correspond to saplings seen in historic photographs of the school from the 1930s to the 1960s (Figures 5, 15). These same historic photographs suggest, however, that shrubs and hedges were planted against the building and along the entry walks and have since been removed and mostly replaced by the open lawns. Three original exterior concrete walkways with steps are set perpendicular to Chancellor Avenue and lead directly to the high school's centered main entrance and two corner side entrances. A fourth walkway is located at the western end of the school, providing access to a cafeteria wing added in 1976. This walkway was modified in the early 2010s with an ADA accessible ramp with two brick pillars displaying the school's logo, and an additional connecting walkway along the cafeteria wing exterior (Photograph 4). A flagpole at the corner of Chancellor Avenue and Aldine Street is most likely original to the school's landscape (Photograph 5). However, none of the freestanding identification signs on the Weequahic High School grounds are from the period of significance of 1932 to 1958.

Exterior Description

Original Exterior – Weequahic High School is a four-story, flat-roof, steel-frame building that is eleven front-facing or southern bays wide and seven side-facing eastern bays deep. Typical of the Art Deco style, its character-defining architectural features play on positive and negative spaces, stress the symmetrical, emphasize vertical forms, and offer rich geometric patterns and decorative details at entrances and roof lines. The school's front-facing façade (south) is a combination of classical symmetry, modernist simplification of form, and intricate detail with the side and rear elevations offering more muted interpretations to reflect their secondary status.

² The Chancellor Avenue Elementary School was completed in 1930 and is also an Art Deco-style building, in this instance designed by Newark architect Frank Grad per a builder's plaque located in an interior hallway. The Chancellor Avenue Elementary School and Weequahic High School are located on separate tax parcels and not physically connected. The athletics center, known as the Ronald G. Stone Community Center Gymnasium, is a separate building that was built in 2010 to the rear of the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School. The athletics center is physically connected to Weequahic High School via a single-story, connecting, glass corridor, which meets the high school's rear northwest corner (Photograph 3). The boundary of the nominated property is drawn so as to exclude the elementary school, athletics center and connecting corridor, which are not considered to be part of the Weequahic High School.

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Beginning at the roof line and working downward, a significant Art Deco architectural detail is the white-glazed, terra-cotta frieze depicting a zig-zag pattern of an owl's head in high relief, two doves, rosettes, and miscellaneous flora (Photograph 10). Historically, "the owl" represents wisdom or calm reflection, and "the dove" represents peace or reconciliation; each appropriate as allegorical figures adorning a school.³ The frieze is present throughout the front-facing façade (south), east elevation, west elevation, and on the top two corners of the northern or rear façade.

Below the roof line, Art Deco verticality is emphasized on most elevations through use of full-height pilasters. Two fluted brick pilasters with diamond-shape, white-glazed, terra-cotta capitals occupy each corner of the building's front façade. The front-facing elevation (south) is the only façade with fluted brick pilasters between each bay. However, the single-story gymnasium wings on the side (east) and north (rear) elevations follow the front-facing façade's pattern. All eight bays of the eastern gymnasium wing are divided by fluted brick pilasters with zigzag-patterned aluminum capitals (Photograph 2). The pilasters between the six bays of the northern gymnasium wing, which is to the rear of the building, are much more restrained with plain brick and simple white-glazed, terra-cotta capitals (Photograph 3).

The presence of multiple rows of brick stringer courses is consistent across all elevations, running between each floor below the windows, contributing to a grid-like geometric pattern within strong vertical lines defined by the pilasters and corner towers. Within the grid created by the vertical pilasters and stringer courses, original classroom windows occur in horizontal ribbons of two, three or four panes, with each pane divided into a three-part sash with a single-hung, one-over-one, steel sash surmounted by a fixed steel sash. Singular windows of this kind are reserved for hallways, stairwells and offices. Nine-pane windows are present on the eastern gymnasium wing and northern senior gymnasium wing, ensuring enough light into the high-ceilinged gyms.

The richest interpretation of the Art Deco style is reserved for the central tower bay or main entrance. The tower is visually composed as a series of stepped setbacks projecting above a flat roof line creating a parapet and embodying a ziggurat motif common to Art Deco (Photograph 6). As the eye works downward from the top of the tower, it is met with a cornice line adorned in a zig-zag pattern of terra-cotta scrolls and acanthus leaves, six flat stone pilasters capped by geometric acanthus leaf capitals flanking two-story columns of steel casement windows divided into five bays, a carved stone spandrel with a vertical chain molding of interlocked semi-circles, a terra-cotta spandrel with low relief rosettes and curling miscellaneous flora and an aluminum spandrel pressed with a pattern of chevrons and eggs.⁴ The tower composition in its entirety is framed within fluted

³ Edward Payson Evans, *Animal Symbolism in Ecclesiastical Architecture* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1896), 32, 76.

⁴ Weequahic High School's façade is believed to incorporate a mixture of carved limestone and cast-stone ornamentation per Logan (1935). Limestone appears to have been used for prominent elements such as the main entrance pilasters while less expensive, industrially produced cast stone for repeating patterns at the cornice and elsewhere, which would be appropriate to the Art Deco style. In the absence of original detailed plans and materials specifications, the preparers of the nomination found visually differentiating limestone from cast stone difficult due to the minor differences in color, texture and disintegration pattern. Further analysis would be required to accurately classify which architectural elements are limestone or cast stone. The descriptions in this nomination utilize the term "stone" to avoid mischaracterization of materials. John H. Logan, "The Weequahic High School in Newark," *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds* 7 (1935), 62-65.

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columns and the engaged setbacks of the ziggurat (Photograph 9). The main entrance is located under a large stone panel that displays the school's name and construction date, "WEEQUAHIC HIGH SCHOOL MCMXXXII," in engraved Art Deco-style lettering (Photograph 8). Below the name of the school is an architrave framing a glass entry light above four doorways. The glass entry light is screened by an intricate bronze grille. The architrave consists of semi-circular, fluted, engaged, stone columns with capitals of restrained acanthus leaves and miscellaneous flora reliefs set within fluted stone pilasters, accentuating depth. The pilasters are capped with geometric stone carvings, scrolls and a vase and flora relief.

To a lesser extent, the form and Art Deco-style details of the main entry tower are repeated in the four additional stairway towers on both end bays of the front (south) and rear (north) elevations (Photograph 7). Each tower terminates just before reaching the roofline. The tower entries on the south elevation are set within projecting stone door-surrounds with ziggurat-esque vertical bands of carved stone with a chevron motif. The rear door-surrounds are less detailed, and only exhibit staggered ziggurat-esque bands of buff brick.

The building's foundation, which is poured concrete, is finished with a coursed, ashlar, limestone veneer. Iron grille work in an Art Deco geometric pattern of diamonds and chevrons covers the basement windows and vents (Photograph 11).

Exterior Alterations – There have been very few alterations to the exterior of Weequahic High School. The rear elevation was raised from three to four floors in 1958, adding classrooms and a hallway that were shown in original plans of 1932 but not built until later when additional classroom space was needed and funds available for construction. The brick used for the fourth floor's rear façade is a close match to the original brick but subtle color differences and construction seams confirm it is a later addition. Due to the fourth-floor addition being on a rear elevation, being part of the original plan, and executed using compatible materials, it is judged to be the terminal date of the building's period of significance from 1932 to 1958.

A later exterior and less compatible alteration was the addition of a two-story, cafeteria wing *circa* 1976 (Photograph 4). This wing is located off of the high school's western elevation and fills the space between Weequahic High School and the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School up to the narrow alley now separating the two buildings. While executed in a buff-colored, exterior brick that is a relatively close match to the earlier high school, the cafeteria wing is absent Art Deco stylistic details and is easily distinguished as a more recent, minimalist construction and is judged to postdate the period of significance.

All of Weequahic High School's exterior entries remain in their original locations except no original exterior doors remain having all been replaced by heavy-duty, steel doors. The original doors, based on photographs from the 1930s, were bronze and had half glazes filled with decorative grilles. The rear entry at the northwest corner now opens onto a glass corridor rather than outdoors. This glass corridor was added in 2010 to connect the high school to the new Ronald G. Stone Community Gymnasium, which is located to the rear of the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School (Photograph 3). The boundary of the nominated resource excludes the glass corridor.

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Interior Description

Weequahic High School has an irregular, rectangular footprint of roughly 43,260 square feet, with each floor arranged around two central light wells (Figures 1-4). Separating the light wells at the center of the building are the main common areas of the auditorium at the first and second floors, and media center, which was the original school cafeteria, at the third floor. There is no central area at the fourth floor. The main corridors providing circulation throughout the building follow a rectangular plan around the light wells and central common areas. The long, straight corridors run from each corner of the building on the second through fourth floors. No hallway was placed at the west end of the first floor due to the change in grade; the western end of the first floor is about 10 feet below ground level and would not have allowed for classrooms with windows necessary for natural light and fresh air. The original floor plan remains completely intact with the exception of the cafeteria wing of *circa* 1976, which was added to the west of the second-floor with two new pass throughs created between the former outer wall and the cafeteria.

Original Interior, Lobby – Access to the lobby is granted through a set of doors in the central tower bay. The landing inside the doors is technically about a half-story above the building's first-floor level. Upon entry, a narrow vestibule is surmounted by a large, recessed, grand, glass light, providing a different perspective on the four intricate and identical exterior bronze grilles (Photograph 12; Figure 7). Four ornate bronze vent grilles set within the recessed walls further bring this exterior detail into the interior. Beyond the vestibule, the lobby is clad predominantly in pink marble and encompassed by a W.P.A. mural titled "The Enlightenment of Man" (see below). At the lobby's center is an Art Deco, ziggurat-inspired, pink marble opening with a central staircase stepping down to the first floor. The downward stairs are flanked by two marble upward staircases that wind in a stepped fashion and convene on the second floor where an Art Deco-style, pendant chandelier hangs at eye level (Photographs 13, 14). The pendant light consists of faceted panels of frosted glass, etched with geometric designs, and set within an exposed wrought-iron skeleton. Additionally, the ceiling is detailed with stepped wood moldings and a decorative, acanthus leaf, plaster motifs. The lobby's central stair case is a half flight of stairs down to a secondary lobby, or auditorium lobby, on the first floor (Photographs 15, 16). Akin to theater design, this space exudes an aura of luxury with its pink marble walls, herringbone-patterned terrazzo floors, and decorative bronze plaques naming the high school's architects, contractors, Board of Education officials and date of construction. Another plaque lists the names of students who served in the military and lost their lives during World War II.

"The Enlightenment of Man" W.P.A. Mural in the Lobby – Affixed to the walls of the main lobby is a mural entitled "The Enlightenment of Man" by artist Michael Lenson. It was installed in 1939 as a Federal Arts Project of the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.). The mural is painted on canvas with oil, and covers the entirety of the main lobby walls, pausing only at the main entry bay and the second-floor opening. "The Enlightenment of Man" depicts a timeline of humankind's history in a realist style. The mural is built around a recurring theme of human progress made only after difficult lessons learned, and some of the darkest periods of history are depicted with a reality that challenges any belief that progress was achieved without violence and terror preceding it.

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The mural's timeline begins on the southern right wall depicting a family of *Homo sapiens*, a sabretooth tiger and a waterfall and erupting volcano in the background (Photograph 34). The family stands at the entrance to a cave as one family member paints an image of an animal similar to the rock paintings found at Serra da Capivara in Brazil. The mural progresses to the east wall as a bright orange sun and an obelisk rises in the background over an Egyptian queen who sits as her slaves forcefully pull an unseen object (Photograph 35). In the foreground, three Egyptian slaves transport a large stone wheel (above the artist's signature) towards the center of the east wall where two Roman soldiers on horseback trample the remains of a Greek temple (Photograph 36). A large Grecian deity, accompanied by an Ionic column, rises behind them with his arms outstretched, looking down at weapon wielding soldiers.⁵

Two monks occupy the left side of the eastern wall (Photograph 37). They are situated within Gothic tracery and appear to be highly focused as one writes in a book with a feathered pen. A small fire appears in the foreground amongst scientific beakers and a bellow. A third monk, represented as Girolamo Savonarola, is depicted on the right side of the northern wall against a backdrop of fire, a cathedral and a distant city (Photograph 38). Savonarola stands atop a pedestal, his face contorted, as he preaches against art and science to an audience of Leonardo da Vinci, Desiderius Erasmus and Dante Alighieri.⁶ In more of the cubist style, Michelangelo chisels at a stone sculpture of a woman at the right.⁷

The left side of the northern wall portrays a scholar at a desk closely reading a book (Photograph 39). The foreground is riddled with stacks of literature and a human skull within a glass display dome. To the immediate left are four enslaved black men who each appear to be working on separate non-descript tasks. This scene coincides with the east wall, exploiting the powerless for economical gain. Representing modern medicine, the western wall proceeds with a team of three modern doctors and nurses attending to a small child. Similar to the Grecian deity on the eastern wall, a large white male stands at the center with his arm outstretched (Photograph 40). He holds a compass and a globe as a woman kneels behind him, holding a jewel which "symbolizes the natural wealth of the United States."⁸ As stated in *The Totem Pole*, the high school's yearbook, "the large figures of a boy and a girl represent American youth... The two are placed against a background of a whirling airplane propeller. The old adage 'youth has wings' here finds expression in airplane wings."⁹ The background contains a modern city, bridge and miscellaneous machinery. At the left, a large bucket of water is poured above the entrance to a mine engulfed in flames. Behind a group of rescuers, an emotionless man stands in a black suit holding a gas mask.

⁵ Julius C. Bernstein, et al. *The Totem Pole: Official Handbook of Weequahic High School* (Newark, New Jersey: The OBA Council, 1959), 5. The *The Totem Pole*, describes this scene as "the conquest of Greece and Greek freedom of expression by militaristic powers, Sparta and Rome. Cultured Greece is crushed beneath them, but its spirit rises up to extend its influence over past and future."

⁶ "The Story of the Weequahic Murals: Excerpts from an article by Barry Lenson, the son of Michael Lenson," Weequahic High School Alumni Association, <https://weequahicalumni.org/>.

⁷ Michael Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964), Smithsonian Archives of American Art. Although not confirmed, Lenson's portrayal of the three monks is likely attributed to his childhood in the Jewish Pale of Settlement, anti-Semitic Russia, and the presence of monks in his town of Galich.

⁸ Bernstein, et al. (1959). 6

⁹ Ibid.

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The left side of the southern wall ends the timeline with a somewhat clouded interpretation of life in the United States during the mid-20th century (Photograph 41). Farmland, a tractor and a house occupy the background as a beam of light illuminates a white family and their cow. Each with blonde hair and blue eyes, the father sits atop a broken cannon wheel said to symbolize peace and “universal enlightenment,” directly correlating with World War I.¹⁰ However, there is something to be said about their facial expressions. All appear to be content but equally emotionless.

Since its installation in 1939, the “Enlightenment of Man” mural has endured a variety of harsh conditions. Both sections of the southern wall exhibit damage caused by the steam heat outlets directly below them, and the paint has darkened significantly. Water and mold damage have also partly deteriorated the bottom of the southern left area and western wall, and multiple sections of the canvas are torn or missing.

Original Interior, Auditorium – The auditorium, situated at the center of the first and second floors, is representative of theater design in the Art Deco era (Photograph 17, Figures 8, 14). It has its main public entry through the corridor at the rear (north end) of the first-floor lobby.¹¹ Five double doors, with non-original steel fire doors, on the first floor allow admission to the main gallery, and four doors provide access to the second-floor sound booth and balcony seating (Photograph 17). Holding an audience capacity over 1,000 people, the main gallery is comprised of four aisles and three sets of the original folding, wooden, auditorium chairs all arranged on a slight downward slope (Photograph 18).¹² Upon entry, the viewer is immediately drawn to the stage at the northern end of the auditorium by way of a ceiling that can only be described as a work of art (Photographs 19, 20). The ceiling resembles an accordion, forming a subtle arch at the southern and northern end, most likely designed to improve the acoustics of the space. Multiple horizontal bands of patterned, cast-metal, ventilation grates cross the ceiling’s structure. Four chandeliers, original to the auditorium, hang from the grates. The pendant chandeliers consist of geometric panels of faceted and frosted glass, etched with floral designs, and set within an exposed wrought-iron skeleton, similar to the one in the main lobby (Photograph 21).

The stage, 24¾ feet by 65 feet, is framed by an Art Deco, stepped or ziggurat-inspired, proscenium arch traced with a thin line of gilding.¹³ Now painted white, the arch’s historic form was darker in color and decorated with three additional lines of gilding. The stage’s front-facing edge has also been painted white with orange letters displaying the school’s name, “WEEQUAHIC.” These recent alterations are reversible, and do not affect the auditorium’s material integrity. Flanking the proscenium arch are fluted pilasters patterned with alternating zigzags and eggs and terminated by molded capitals of peach and gold tulip heads. The northern corners of the auditorium are curved, containing large, rectangular and intricate ventilation grates, a doorway, and an exit sign set within a decorative gold-colored frame of zigzags and chevrons. The east and west walls contain a paneled wood wainscot with multiple, ornate, rectangular, unpainted, cast-aluminum vents, and four large rectangular windows situated between plain, single-paneled pilasters. The windows terminate below an intricate plaster border displaying a gold, peach, beige and brown relief of a fountain, rosettes and corn within an octagonal

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ I. Joseph Hyatt, *Life and Death of a Movie Theater: The Story of a Neighborhood Movie Palace* (CreateSpace Publishing: 2015).

¹² John H. Logan, “The Weequahic High School in Newark,” *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds* 7 (1935), 62.

¹³ Ibid.

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frame (Photograph 22). Sections of the wainscot and architrave trim have been painted orange to match the school's colors.

Original Interior, Corridors – There are four main corridors per floor, each with a rectangular plan. Access to the corridors is through stairwells located at the building's corners. Flooring is the original terrazzo in a checkerboard pattern of tan-colored squares and black borders. The corridors of the upper three floors are lined with classrooms and teacher offices to either side, and sheet-steel lockers are along most walls between classroom and office doors (Photograph 31, 32). Although the lockers have recently been repainted orange to match the school's colors, most of the lockers appear to be original. Walls not covered by lockers are decorated with fluted, terra-cotta tile; wainscoting below plaster walls; and, periodically, arched, terra-cotta tile, water fountain alcoves (Photograph 33).

Original Interior, Gymnasiums – The high school has two gymnasiums originally referred to as the “senior” and “junior” gymnasiums. The senior gymnasium is located off the northern side or rear of the building. It is approximately 90-feet wide by 55-feet deep.¹⁴ Entrance to the gymnasium is accessed through the rear (north) first-floor corridor directly behind the auditorium and is flanked by a girl's (west) and boy's (east) locker room (Photograph 23; Figure 11). The junior gymnasium is located off of the eastern side elevation and is approximately 30-feet wide by 90-feet deep. Entrance to this gymnasium is accessed through a hallway located in the basement. The gymnasium interiors have buff brick walls; large nine-pane windows with steel grille guards to prevent damage from gymnasium activities; rectangular iron grills over ventilation openings below the windows; wood paneled floors; and folding, accordion, wooden partition walls originally intended to separate the girl's classes from the boy's classes.

Original Interior, Classrooms – Academic classrooms occupy the perimeter of the second, third and fourth floors, and range in dimensions from approximately 20 feet by 24 feet to 24 feet by 61 feet (Figures 12-13). The largest rooms have continued to be reserved for the arts and sciences to accommodate equipment and materials, and the space needed to properly use them. Classrooms follow the standard format in which the main blackboard and the teacher's desk are situated at the front near the entry door, a bulletin board or supplemental blackboard occupies the inner wall, and student tables or desks fill the remaining space (Photograph 26). Many of the rooms have original wood doors with nine-light glazes and wood-paneled clerestory windows that allow the natural light from the light wells to filter into the interior classrooms (Photograph 27). Plaster walls have remained white or light colored, and much of the wood flooring is intact and visible or covered over by linoleum.

Original Interior, Main Office – The main office is located on the southern side of the second floor, and includes a central outer office flanked by an inner conference room, principal's office and storage space (Photograph 28). The outer office is approximately 24 feet by 35 feet. A small corridor leads to the principal's office, which has retained its original wood door, including the sandblasted glazing. Plaster walls have remained white or light colored, and wood doors and architrave trim are intact. Linoleum flooring has replaced or covered over the original wood floors. The outer office contains two exceptional pieces of furniture original to the

¹⁴ Ibid., 63.

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building's interior. One being a large steel filing cabinet that doubles as a service desk, and the other a wooden Art Deco-style clock and call bell system (Photographs 29-30).

Interior Alterations – Character-altering changes are remarkably few given the high school's many decades of use. Among those changes of note are replacement of stairwell and auditorium doors with modern steel fire doors, removal of porcelain water fountains (although terra-cotta alcoves remain) and replacement of office, hallway, gymnasium and classroom light fixtures with fluorescent lighting. The media center, or library, which is located at the center of the third floor, was originally the cafeteria. The space originally had two seating areas, a kitchen and a service counter.¹⁵ Historic photographs present the cafeteria with wooden architrave trim detail and terra-cotta tiled walls (Figure 10). Natural light was received by the flanking light wells through multiple, double-hung, hopper windows. None of the original interior detail of the cafeteria survives today, having been removed *circa* 1976 at the same time that the new cafeteria wing was constructed and the old cafeteria converted into a media center. Presently, the media center is a single large room with plain walls, carpeted floors, fluorescent lighting and suspension ceiling panels (Photograph 25). The building's original and much smaller, Art Deco-style library was located on the southern end of the fourth floor (Figure 6). Currently, the fourth floor is occupied by the Eagle Academy Charter School and the former library space has not retained its material integrity having been converted into a classroom. The single-story cafeteria wing of *circa* 1976 is approximately 82 -feet wide by 250-feet deep and consists of a central kitchen and service bar flanked by two seating areas accessible from the original school's second floor western hallway. All materials are modern and standard including tiled walls, linoleum flooring, suspension ceiling panels, fluorescent lighting and particleboard/laminate cafeteria tables (Photograph 24).

Current Condition and Statement of Integrity – No major condition issues exist that impact Weequahic High School's historic architectural character. The building remains in use as a public school and undergoes regular maintenance. The building retains integrity of location. Its integrity of setting remains intact including the grounds that set the building back from the street grid. Its spatial relationships to neighboring buildings and the surrounding mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood are unchanged. It is located on a block that was developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s as neighborhood school complex with the adjacent Chancellor Avenue Elementary School completed two years prior in 1930. The principal modern intrusion into the setting is the Ronald G. Stone Community Gymnasium, which is a separate building located behind the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School. Although a glass corridor has been constructed to connect the community gymnasium and the high school, it did not alter the design of the high school and is only visible from the Vassar Avenue (rear) frontage of the block where it connects with the former exterior stairwell doorway in the northwest corner of the high school. The Weequahic High School's integrity of design, materials and workmanship remains with no major character-altering changes. The building's significant Art Deco-style is expressed in its many intact interior and exterior details. The most impactful of the post-1958 alterations are the cafeteria wing addition of *circa* 1976, which altered the western side elevation resulting in loss of the classroom windows on the second floor. Integrity of feeling and association are present and reflecting the high school's original and continued educational usage.

¹⁵ Ibid., 64.

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8. Statement of Significance

Summary

Weequahic High School is locally significant in the area of architecture under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco architectural style as applied to a large urban public high school. It was built in 1932-33 to a design prepared by Guilbert and Betelle, a Newark, New Jersey-based architectural firm that specialized in academic architecture and was active from 1910 to 1939. Among the building's significant character-defining features are its floor plan and spatial organization. It incorporates a central auditorium large enough for the entire student population; two gymnasiums for classes that could be segregated by gender; administrative offices near the main entrance with an original master clock and bells; 125 classrooms with ordinary classrooms of 20 feet by 24 feet (considered ideal for pedagogical reasons of promoting student-teacher interactions) and larger specialized classrooms and labs for the sciences, arts and music; terra-cotta tiled corridors for ease of cleaning; rectangular-plan hallways with corner stairs to promote circulation and sufficient space for every student to have an individual locker, and classrooms arranged around the perimeter of two central light wells for natural light and ventilation. Among the Art Deco character-defining stylistic features are a strong geometrical façade with a series of setbacks creating a central, stepped, ziggurat outline; fluted pilasters and stairwells with stacked windows to emphasize verticality; decorative elements in low-relief featuring artistic motifs and geometric forms; decorative window spandrels and grilles; and stylized interior décor such as pendant lighting and decorative metal ventilation grilles. Weequahic High School is among the most architecturally outstanding of seven Art Deco public schools built by the Newark Board of Education from 1928 to 1933. Additionally, Weequahic High School has local significance in the area of art for Michael Lenson's mural, "The Enlightenment of Man," a New Deal's Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) Federal Arts Project. The mural was created specifically for the lobby in 1939 and is an important example in Newark of the American scene movement and social realism, which is closely associated with the W.P.A. muralists. This style of mural is defined in part by depictions of human figures acting out everyday activities.¹⁶ The subject matter of "The Enlightenment of Man," also befitting this genre, is an artistic expression of concern about the potential for scientific progress to be used against humanity, as witnessed throughout history. The period of significance of Weequahic High School is 1932 to 1958. Specific dates are construction of the school in 1932-33, installation of "The Enlightenment of Man" mural in 1939, and the construction of the rear fourth-floor classrooms in 1958, which was part of the original plan of 1932 but not executed until 1958.

¹⁶ American Scene Painting, *The Art History Archive* (Toronto, 2023), on-line, www.arthistoryarchive.arthistory/americanscene/ [accessed July 2023].

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The following narrative statement of significance address two local areas of significance in architecture and art.

1. Local Significance in the Area of Architecture – Art Deco-Style Urban High School of the Early 20th Century

Context of Urban School Planning and Design in Newark in the Early 20th Century – Weequahic High School is an example of an urban school property type that emerged in the early years of the 20th century. Its plan and spatial organization reflect a collaboration of educators and architects who blended new uses into massive high schools of 150,000 square feet or more of usable space (Figures 1-5). These large schools were meant to accommodate classrooms for the growing numbers of children swelling America's cities, many of them immigrants. Important to progressive-minded educators and architects, the new buildings, especially the high schools, offered modern facilities for specialized instruction in subjects such as the sciences in labs, industrial arts in shops, home economics in kitchens and physical education in gyms. Spaces were sized and outfitted appropriately to promote educational goals, allow efficient movement throughout the building, assembly of the entire student body in large auditoriums and delivery of food services. Based on a chronology created by the Newark Board of Education, Newark built 31 new schools between 1910 and 1933, seven of which were large public high schools and the remainder smaller elementary schools or junior high schools. Guilbert and Betelle designed 15 of the 31 schools, including all seven high schools. Various architectural stylistic treatments were applied to the schools including Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, Late Renaissance Revival, Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival, Neoclassical and Art Deco. Seven of the 31 schools, or slightly less than one-quarter, were in the Art Deco style (discussed further below). Newark's success at addressing the need for new schools fell well within the norm of similar approaches being undertaken in other major American cities but was by far the largest such effort in New Jersey.¹⁷

As background, free public education had been instituted in the City of Newark in 1850 and its first public high school opened in 1855.¹⁸ During the second half of the 19th century, dozens of schools were constructed, most following relatively simple classroom plans. Many of these were little different than those developed by educational reformer Henry Barnard in the 1850s and popular throughout urban and rural America until the end of the century and in some rural areas well into the 20th century. Barnard advocated for schools with the central feature being well-lit, ventilated and heated classrooms where desks were arranged in rows facing a teacher and

¹⁷ Ralph Turp, Public Schools in the City of Newark, New Jersey, 1850-1965, Rutgers University, Thesis, 1976; "District History," Newark Board of Education, www.nps.k12.nj.us. The six high schools were East Side Commercial and Manual Training High School (1911, Georgian Revival), Central Commercial and Manual Training High School (1912, Gothic Revival), Newark Normal School (1913, Tudor Revival), South Side High School (1913, Gothic Revival), West Side High School (1926, Georgian Revival), Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts (1931, Art Deco) and Weequahic High School (1932-33, Art Deco).

¹⁸ "District History," Newark Board of Education, www.nps.k12.nj.us. The high school of 1855 was demolished in 1931. Compulsory free public education was not required in all New Jersey municipalities until 1871 and high schools for grades 9 through 12 were not required until 1907. The City of Newark was often in the forefront of progressive educational trends.

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chalkboard.¹⁹ Little else was needed in the buildings, although over time small offices, bathrooms with interior plumbing and cloakrooms became common. Most architectural pattern books such as Barnard's offered architects and builders options for one and two-story schools, with the number of classrooms varying on the need, from one to four rooms, but rarely exceeding twelve rooms. Most schools had nothing else in them but classrooms and small rooms to serve as teachers' offices or coat closets. In Newark, for example, public schools as late as 1900 were typically two-stories, constructed of brick with rows of classrooms arranged in a line on each floor. These schools often took on ornamentation and bell or clock towers that reflected period architectural styles of the late Victorian era (Supplemental Figure 1). While many schools had schoolyards, usually in front, lots were small and surrounding landscape usually given much little thought. Many of the schools were located in densely populated urban neighborhoods with the sides and rears of the buildings close against neighboring properties. By 1910, the city had 62 schools, most of them neighborhood schools similar to that just described, and outdated. With a total enrollment of 57,000 students, that equated to an average of almost 900 students per school, resulting in significant overcrowding.²⁰ The usual approach taken by the Newark Board of Education to addressing the challenge was to construct a wing to the rear and perpendicular to the older buildings, forming a "T" plan.²¹

Nationally, educational reformers stood behind advances in the enlargement of urban schools, specialized use of spaces and the application of high architectural and construction standards. A milestone in this regard was the publication of *Democracy in Education* by educational philosopher John Dewey in 1916. Dewey and other progressive educators, many trained in state teacher's colleges or "normal" schools, emphasized the importance of "experience learning" and a healthy student-teacher relationship. They incorporated subjects such as science and social studies into school curricula, and technical fields such as industrial arts and home economics within specialized classrooms. In turn, architects were engaged to offer expertise in school planning and design in order to accommodate an expanding range of activities within the schools. The "growing tendency to devote the school to the broader educational uses and to various sorts of social betterment and neighborhood work" had placed additional design problems on architects in "providing a building that could be used for many purposes... and many of them at the same time if necessary."²² This outlook also influenced architects to acknowledge that academic architecture, even within the realm of public grade schools, deserved careful attention to detail and aesthetic treatments that reflected the cultural value of education. Along with adequate lighting and ventilation from bands of multi-light sashes and clerestory windows, the school lot and building size increased to serve multiple neighborhoods and include facilities such as separate classrooms, auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias and administration offices. Landscape, building orientation, entry placement and circulation, room size and vision distance to the blackboard, standards in air circulation and fire safety, lighting,

¹⁹ Henry Barnard, *Practical Illustrations of the Principles of School Architecture* (Hartford, Connecticut: Press of Case, Tiffany and Company, 1851) and *School Architecture, or Contributions to the Improvement of School-Houses in the United States* (New York: Charles B. Norton, 1854).

²⁰ "Increase Noted in Enrollment of School Pupils," *Newark Evening Star and Newark Advertiser* (Newark, New Jersey) September, 16, 1911, 2.

²¹ Turp 1976; Cynthia R. Rose, River Street School National Register Nomination Registration Form [NRIS# 95000410], 1995.

²² Rawson W. Haddon, "Modern American School Houses: Some Recent Examples of Specialized Buildings, Guilbert & Betelle Architects," *The Architectural Record* 36, no. 3 (September 1914), 245.

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soundproofing, and furnishing and decoration were elements of design that had not been carefully considered in most school buildings built in Newark or elsewhere prior to the early years of the 20th century.²³

James O. Betelle of Guilbert and Betelle successfully articulated the expanding requirements on school architecture in an article entitled “Essentials of High School Planning,” published in *The American Architect* in 1915. Classrooms were to vary in size from 22 feet in width and 30 feet in length to 25 feet wide and 32 feet long. “Any room larger than this is found unsatisfactory” so that the teacher could maximize time given to each individual. Additionally, built-in blackboards were placed at the front and sides of the room “to obviate the confusion and inconvenience on the part of the pupils of turning completely around in their seats to see a board at the rear.”²⁴ Science rooms (physics laboratory, chemistry laboratory, biological laboratory, cooking laboratory, sewing room, and arts and crafts room) were to be located on the top floor and span the size of at least one-and-a-half classrooms. Laboratories needed additional space for equipment and materials including fume hoods, storage closets, gas connections to tables, numerous sinks, and teacher preparation and materials stocking areas. Other supplemental classrooms included drawing rooms (mechanical and free-hand) located to provide adequate natural light, domestic science rooms with model apartments, library and bookkeeping rooms, study halls, typewriting rooms and laundry rooms, all of which can be found in the original plans for Weequahic High School.

The location, arrangement and size of spaces designated for other uses were equally well thought out. Betelle suggested that an auditorium should be large enough to seat the full number of students attending the school, and the stage big enough to accommodate a full graduating class. A gymnasium should be located below or at ground level with a minimum dimension of 40 feet wide by 70 feet long. The gymnasium was to be close to locker rooms and be near to outdoor entrances to allow direct access to recreational fields. Schools containing one thousand or more students were to have two gymnasiums or a sliding partition wall in the single gym to separate the girls’ and boys’ classes. The principal and administrative offices were to be located near the main entrance, consisting of an outer public office, staff rooms and an inner principal’s office with easy access to the corridor. The office should contain a telephone and pay phone, bulletin board, file cabinet for student records, fire alarm, master clock and program bell buttons. Corridor walls were to be wainscoted with glazed tile, buff brick, or painted burlap for ease of cleaning, and contain drinking fountains, fire bells and fire hose, and accessible vacuum cleaner outlets. Male and female bathrooms were to be evenly distributed throughout each floor “on the account of the toilets being used particularly during change in classes.” Space for student lockers should be reserved in basements, near entrances or along the sides of corridors to avoid in-class disruption.²⁵ The fully equipped school cafeteria gained momentum in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1932, Betelle wrote in an article titled “The Trend in School Building Design” for *Architecture* magazine that “it is now conceded by everyone that for the health of the children something better than a cold lunch hastily swallowed should be provided, both in the rural and in the city schools, which means some sort of hot dishes and a better place in which to eat. To do this some kind of kitchen must be provided, and in the larger schools a cafeteria lunch-room

²³ James O. Betelle, “The Trend in School Building Design” *Architecture* 65, 5 (May 1932), 250.

²⁴ Haddon (1914), 248; James O. Betelle, “Essentials of High School Planning.” *The American Architect* (1909-1921) (September 1915), 163.

²⁵ Betelle, (1915), 162-167.

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as well.”²⁶ The Weequahic High School’s original cafeteria was centrally located on the third floor in the space now occupied by the media center (Figure 10).

Weequahic High School embodies a progressive plan and spatial organization that defines an urban high school of the early 20th century as envisioned by educational reformers and architects. Among its surviving features are its circulatory plan and corner stairs, large central auditorium with stage, two gymnasiums, administrative offices on the second floor next to the main lobby, glazed terra-cotta tile wainscoted corridors, arrangement of classrooms of a standardized on a 20 foot by 24-foot plan with larger classrooms for science labs and other specialized curricula like the arts, mostly on the third and fourth floors (Figures 12-13).

The Art Deco Style, Overview of National Origins and Use in New Jersey – The Art Deco style had its origins in the early to mid-1920s and was heavily influenced by European and American architects who participated in or visited the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes, held in Paris in 1925. These architects were taken with the idea that modernity could be expressed through geometric forms and ornamentation that relied less heavily on classically derived, revival-style, architectural traditions of western Europe. American buildings often mentioned as at the forefront of the Art Deco style were the Arsenal Building in New York City, a skyscraper designed by architect Ely Jacques Kahn and completed in 1925, and the Wilshire Department Store in Los Angeles, designed by architects John and Donald Parkinson in 1928. Finnish-born architect and designer Eliel Saarinen was one of the leading influencers of Art Deco, migrating to the United States in 1923 and making his mark with a winning entry for design of a new Chicago Tribune building that same year.²⁷

Art Deco architectural style is predominately rectilinear with common motifs being fluting, reeding, horizontal bands above or below windows and doors, and application of chevrons and zigzags in low relief. Nature-inspired, allegorical or curvilinear motifs in architectural ornament emerged from Art Deco’s predecessor Art Nouveau circa 1890-1910. Verticality is emphasized in most Art Deco buildings by setbacks and the use of oblong blocks or pilasters. Use of contrasting colors and materials is also common, often in a range of creamy and pastel pallets. All of these stylistic defining features are present at Weequahic High School. Art Deco reached its height of national popularity during the 1930s and had fallen out of favor by the late 1940s and the 1950s giving way to less ornamental, modernist architecture.²⁸

Art Deco could be adapted to fit buildings of varying form or purpose and it has been described “first of all a style of ornament.”²⁹ It was applied to many types of buildings and structures. Its most outstanding examples tend to be skyscrapers, commercial buildings, train stations and airports, hospitals, schools, government offices, theaters, urban apartment blocks, diners and bridges. In most instances, Art Deco is a style of professional architects who were promoting or responding to a new architectural trend and desire to express a “modern”

²⁶ Betelle, (1932), 250.

²⁷ Marcus Whitten, *American Architecture since 1870* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993), 234-240; Richard Striner, *Art Deco* (New York: Archetype Press, Inc., and Abbeville Press, 1994), 25-29.

²⁸ Ibid.; Bevis Hillier, *Art Deco of the 20s and 30s* (London: The Herbert Press Limited, 1968), 40-52.

²⁹ Whitten (1993), 235.

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aesthetic. Examples of all of these property types are found in New Jersey, mostly within urban centers such as Camden, Jersey City, Trenton, Paterson and, most of all, Newark. These cities experienced their earliest Art Deco buildings in downtown areas during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Prominent examples include the Jersey City Medical Arts Center, built in phases from 1928 to 1931, by architect John T. Rowland, Jr. and Paterson's Hinchliffe Stadium, built in 1932, by architect John Shaw of Fanning and Shaw.³⁰ In Newark, prominent Art Deco buildings are the Newark Metropolitan Airport Buildings, built in 1928; New Jersey Bell Headquarters Building, built in 1929, by architect Ralph Thomas Walker of the firm Vorhees, Gmelin and Walker; the American Insurance Company Building, built in 1930, by architect Frank Grad; the National Newark and Essex Bank Building, built in 1931, by architects John H. and Wilson C. Ely; and Newark Pennsylvania Station, opened in 1935, by architects McKim, Mead & White.³¹

A list of character-defining features for Art Deco, based on comparison of the above properties and scholarly literature, includes:

- Horizontal massing with sweeping vertical elements
- Flat roof
- Single and/or multiple projecting entry tower(s) or bays reminiscent of the ziggurat form
- Pilasters and/or piers divide window bays
- Brick with architectural detail and ornament in contrasting stone and terra cotta materials
- Thin rectangular vertical windows singular or in ribbons
- Patterned spandrels
- Stone name plate
- Use of contrasting materials and colors in muted cream tones and pastels
- Ornate bronze, aluminum and steel grilles and vents
- Geometric motifs (zigzags, chevrons, eggs, octagons, speed lines, sunbursts, key patterns)
- Allegorical, flora and fauna reliefs

These character-defining features of Art Deco style are each present at Weequahic High School. Although it was neither the earliest or first of the Art Deco-style buildings in the Newark metropolitan area, its level of detail and completeness marks it as significant in a local context.

Comparative Examples of Art Deco-style Schools in Newark —The Newark Board of Education built seven Art Deco-style schools between 1928 and 1949, three of which were designed by Guilbert and Betelle (Essex County Girls Vocations School, Newark Public School of Fine and Industrial Arts and Weequahic High School) and three

³⁰ Terry Karschner, Jersey City Medical Center, National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form [NRIS# 85003057], 1981; Flavia Alaya, Hinchliffe Stadium, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 04000223]. 2003.

³¹ Diana Cave, Pennsylvania Station, National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form [NRIS# 78001760], 1978; Cynthia Martin Goldsmith, Newark Metropolitan Airport, National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form [NRIS# 80002485], 1980; John Tess, New Jersey Bell Headquarters Building, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 05001054], 2005; Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Settings, Eleven80 [American Insurance Company Building] and National Newark Building [National Newark and Essex Bank Building], on-line at www.skyscrapercenter.com [accessed July 2023].

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others by architects Frederick Cook (Dayton Street School), Frank Grad (Chancellor Avenue School) and Simpson and Rolston (Boylan Street School). The architect of the seventh school, the Ivy Street School, is unknown, although it has been attributed at times to Guilbert and Betelle.³²

Other than Weequahic High School, only one of the six other examples fully embodies the Art Deco architectural style applied to a large public high school. The Newark Public School of Fine and Industrial Arts (Supplemental Figure 6), also designed by Guilbert & Betelle and completed in 1931, is a four-story, U-plan, blonde brick building with a flat roof, thin rectangular window openings divided by stepped pilasters and geometric-patterned brick spandrels, chevron band detail, and a ziggurat-inspired projecting entry tower with a stone door surround, white terra cotta reeding, geometric designs, and ornate metal grilles. The Newark Public School of Fine and Industrial Arts stands in most respects as an equal to the Weequahic High School.

The other Art Deco-style school in Newark designed by Guilbert and Betelle is the Essex County Girls Vocational School (Supplemental Figure 3), which opened in 1930. It is a two-story, symmetrical, horizontally massed, blonde-brick building with thin rectangular three-ribbon windows divided by plain, stepped pilasters. Terra-cotta ornamentation is only present on the projecting entry bay, which contains fluted pilasters and allegorical emblems. At only two stories, it lacks the strong Art Deco-defining vertical lines of Weequahic High School.

Art Deco ornamentation is less exuberant and somewhat limited in its impact in the remaining four Newark schools, suggesting that the Newark Board of Education and their architects may have been more cost-conscious in their approach to the buildings. The four are also elementary schools, which were typically designed to be smaller neighborhood schools and may have been viewed as less deserving of a fuller Art Deco treatment. A case in point is Weequahic High School's next-door neighbor, the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 4), designed by Frank Grad and opened in 1930. Compared to Weequahic, it resembles a smaller, less-ornate sister, standing a story shorter at three-stories with a blonde brick façade, flat roof, singular and five-ribbon windows divided by varying heights of pilasters and ziggurat-inspired designs. Its projecting stone entry tower has terra-cotta elements of fluting, reeding, and floral emblems and motifs, complemented by pressed-metal designs. The Boylan Street Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 2), which opened in 1929, the Ivy Hill Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 5), which opened in 1931, and the Dayton Street Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 14), which opened in 1949, are less strongly influenced by application of Art Deco ornamentation and hardly compare to Weequahic High School's level of detail and workmanship. Ivy Hill Elementary is a three-story, symmetrical, blonde-brick building containing three- and six-ribbon windows, and a slight projecting center entry bay ordained with a thin zig-zag band and divided by fluted columns. The most interesting feature is the rounded transom with a simple sunburst motif over the main entry. Both the Boylan Street Elementary School and Dayton Street Elementary School are much more austere than the Weequahic High

³² The Ivy Street School appears on some Guilbert and Betelle lists but this attribution could not be substantiated through any primary sources available to the researchers. The building is significantly more subdued than any of the schools designed by Guilbert and Betelle and does not look like their other work.

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School and relate only to the Art Deco-style through application of basic architectural elements such as brick construction, flat roofs, ribbon windows and projecting entry bays.³³

Comparative Examples of Art Deco-style Schools in New Jersey – Art Deco-style schools are found in municipalities in New Jersey other than Newark including the cities of Jersey City, Paterson and Trenton and the smaller municipalities of Bloomfield and Fair Haven. Analysis suggests that Art Deco stylistic treatments were applied at first to schools in northern or central New Jersey urban areas with the trend beginning in Newark during the late 1920s, followed by Jersey City in the early 1930s, and spreading to Paterson and Trenton toward the mid- to late-1930s. The Art Deco-style in school architecture seldom was used in New Jersey beyond urban settings, though one example is present in Bloomfield, a suburban of Newark in Essex County, and Fair Haven, a small town in Monmouth County. Aside from Newark's seven Art Deco-style schools, the City of Trenton offers the next largest population with four examples. As a style associated with progressive and modernist tastes, Art Deco was less likely to appeal to more conservative rural communities.³⁴

New Jersey's Art Deco-style schools share many commonalities including brick construction; symmetrical design and horizontal massing; flat roofs; projecting entry tower(s) or bay(s); thin vertical windows or window ribbons; windows divided by decorative or stepped pilasters; carved stone, terra-cotta and metal ornamentation; and geometric, allegorical, flora and fauna motifs or emblems. However, the Art Deco architectural style is highly individualistic with differing approaches to application and no two schools are identical. Public School No. 36 in Jersey City (Supplemental Figure 7), which opened in 1931, was designed by architect John T. Rowland, Jr., who served as the Supervising Architect of Jersey City Board of Education for 42 years from 1903 to 1945, and also designed the Jersey City Medical Center. Public School No. 36, later renamed the A. Harry Moore School, is likely the most distinguished of the Art Deco-style schools outside of Newark, containing strong vertical lines within a symmetrical, ziggurat-inspired design, blonde brick façade, window openings divided by stepped pilasters, and ornate, white, terra-cotta, floral spandrels and chevron patterns. Other New Jersey schools are modest in respect to their Art Deco ambitions with less ornamentation, reserving most, if not all, detail to the projecting entry tower(s) or bay(s). Examples include three Trenton schools – Ulysses S. Grant Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 9), which opened in 1938, Paul Robeson Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 13), which opened in 1943, and Washington Elementary School, date unknown. The Willow Street School in Fair Haven (Supplemental Figure 8), designed by J. Robert Pierson and Son and opened in 1935, and Public Elementary School No. 5 in Paterson (Supplemental Figure 11), opened in 1939, draw viewers' eyes to continuous terra-cotta bands across their rooflines. The bands are relieved by geometric and floral patterns, similar in concept to the Weequahic High School. Trenton's Parker Public Elementary School (Supplemental Figure 10), which opened in 1938, and Bloomfield's Junior High School (Supplemental Figure 12), which opened in 1939, are later examples of Art Deco that lean more toward Art Moderne, characterized by a simplified, streamlined appearance, limited ornamentation, and clean, curved corners. In sum, Weequahic High School compares favorably within a statewide population of Art Deco-style schools as embodying a period, type and method of construction; however,

³³ Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc. Intensive Level Survey of the Newark Public Schools: Historic and Architectural Survey in City of Newark. 2005. On file, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Trenton, New Jersey.

³⁴ The statewide comparative data is drawn from New Jersey Historic Preservation Office online survey files available through the Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS), July 2023.

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each property's significance is strongest and best understood when it is locally based and contextualized within the individual design choices made by school boards and their consulting or supervising architects.³⁵

Guilbert and Betelle – The architectural firm of Guilbert and Betelle formed in 1910 as a partnership between Ernest F. Guilbert (b.1869-d.1916) and James O. Betelle (b.1879-d.1954). Both men had pedigrees working on the staffs of prominent American architects prior to forming their partnership; Guilbert's resume included stints with Henry Hobson Richardson in Boston, Henry Ives Cobb in Chicago, and Cass Gilbert in New York City, while Betelle had been with Cope and Stewardson in Philadelphia, John Russel Pope in New York City and Cass Gilbert. It is likely that Guilbert and Betelle met in Gilbert's offices sometime in the early 1900s.

The partnership of Guilbert and Betelle and its specialization in academic architecture was an outgrowth of Ernest F. Guilbert being appointed the official supervising architect of the Newark Board of Education in 1908. He was charged to address the "schoolhouse problem" of antiquated and overcrowded schools.³⁶ Although Guilbert completed a school addition and a gymnasium during 1909, the pace of work picked up considerably after he made his partnership with Betelle in 1910. The following two to three years were astoundingly productive with the Newark Board of Education reporting completion of nineteen new school buildings or additions to accommodate an additional 15,000 students. While a majority of this design work and construction supervision was done directly by Guilbert and Betelle, it also includes schools designed by other consulting architects working under Ernest F. Guilbert's supervision as the Newark Board of Education's architect.³⁷

Guilbert and Betelle quickly accepted the mantle of being expert school architects. *The Architectural Record* wrote in 1914 that "Among these specialists there are, perhaps, few whose work, extending over a period of years, has maintained the high degree of excellence, both in planning and in exterior design — this later especially — that is noticeable in the work of Messrs. Guilbert and Betelle of Newark, New Jersey."³⁸ The firm proved to be particularly adept at fulfilling a number of goals in its designs including providing a rationale plan for the use of space, as well as architecturally stylish buildings that were well-received by educators, students and the communities. Guilbert and Betelle practiced in multiple stylistic influences including Gothic Revival (often referred to as Collegiate Gothic), Late Renaissance Revival, Tudor Revival, Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival, Flemish Revival, Neoclassical and, of course, Art Deco.³⁹ Writing for *The American School Board*

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Haddon (1914), 244-263. The use of the word "schoolhouse" in this context likely implied a backward-looking perspective on schools as merely four walls enclosing classrooms.

³⁷ "Recent Schools of E. F. Guilbert and Guilbert and Betelle," *The American School Board Journal* 44 (1912), 19-27. A full portfolio of Guilbert and Betelle's Newark school designs is difficult to assess because the firm left no archives, original plans are lost or scattered, and there is a tendency to confuse the firm's schools with its principals' official capacity as the Newark Board of Education's appointed architects. Some lists of their work clearly include buildings that they did not design, only supervised. For example, the Chancellor Avenue School, which stands just west of the Weequahic Avenue School, is frequently mentioned as a Guilbert and Betelle design, yet the plaque inside the building lists Frank Grad as the architect. The likely explanation is that James O. Betelle was the supervising architect employed by the Newark Board of Education to oversee and check Grad's work.

³⁸ Haddon (1914), 245.

³⁹ Guilbert and Betelle also constructed one, two, and three-room schoolhouses in Delaware for Pierre S. DuPont. DuPont was president of the DuPont de Nemours Corporation and produced the majority of the explosives used in World War I. He also founded

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Journal in 1919, Betelle stressed three fundamental considerations in deciding the architectural style of a building: environment, local traditions or history, and climate. "The new school should harmonize with the existing buildings to enhance the beauty of the other," and the use of local materials makes for a better harmony.⁴⁰ "The design of the exterior of the buildings should express the character and purpose for which the interior of the building is used, as 'truthful expression' is just as desirable in architecture as it is in all other things in life."⁴¹ Although the general uses and plans remained similar for public schools, each building contained distinctive architectural detail and ornament.

In 1916, Guilbert died at the early age of 47. Betelle temporarily closed the firm's offices and accepted a captaincy in the United States Sanitation Corps, serving in Europe until the end of World War I in 1919. On Betelle's return to America, he eventually took up Guilbert's former responsibility as supervising architect for the Newark Board of Education, receiving an official appointment in 1922. He also restarted in private practice continuing to work under the Guilbert and Betelle partnership name for the remainder of his career. He also appeared on the list of instructors at the Teachers College of Columbia University from 1917 to 1925, serving as a lecturer in school architecture. The decade from 1923 to 1933 resulted in the firm's most prolific years. At one point, the firm may have had over 200 architects and draftsmen either working directly for it or under its supervision. Along with two or three scores of schools throughout the State of New Jersey, the firm expanded its reach to Connecticut, Delaware, New York and Pennsylvania, and designed a number of banks, hotels, offices and residences. *TIME* magazine, reporting in August 1931, suggested that Guilbert and Betelle may have designed and supervised the erection of over \$100 million worth of educational structures, "an all-time world record."⁴² The count, according to *TIME*, included 56 high schools, eleven junior high schools, six vocational

the Service Citizens of Delaware that sought to improve health, education, housing. "The conditions of public school property, which were ascertained by an exhaustive survey, led Mr. DuPont to set aside \$2,669,000 for the rebuilding of school houses, nine hundred thousand dollars of this amount to be used in building rural colored schools." Source: James O. Betelle, "New School Buildings, State of Delaware," *The American Architect* (1909-1921) (June 1920), 756.

⁴⁰ James O. Betelle, "Architectural Styles as Applied to School Buildings," *The American School Board Journal* 58, 4 (April 1919): 26.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁴² Eight individual buildings, seven of the eight schools, by Guilbert and Betelle that have been previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places are the Colonial Revival-style Public School No. 111-C (*circa* 1920), a one-room segregated Black school in Christiana, Delaware; Georgian Revival-style Glenville School (1921) in Greenwich, Connecticut; the Colonial Revival-style Ross Point School (1922), a rural segregated Black school in Laurel, Delaware; the Colonial Revival-style Iron Hill School Number 112C (1923), a rural one-room segregated Black school near Newark, Delaware; the Georgian Revival-style Essex Club (1926) in Newark; the late Gothic Revival-style Vineland High School (1927) in Vineland, New Jersey; several Georgian Revival-style buildings added to the existing campus of the New Jersey Manual Training and Industrial Arts School for Colored Youth (1929-1931) in Bordentown, New Jersey; and the Collegiate Gothic-style Charles B. Lore Elementary School (1932) in Wilmington, Delaware. None of these listed schools are in the Art Deco style nor as large and urban as the Weequahic High School. Sources: Dean E. Nelson, Public School No. 111-C, National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form [NRIS# 79000625], 1979; Clayton McClane, Charles B. Lore Elementary School, National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form [NRIS# 8300137], 1983; Susan Brizzolara, Iron Hill School Number 112C, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 95001032], 1995; W. Jane Brandt, Vineland High School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 95000181], 1995; Nan Pillsbury, The New Jersey Manual Training and Industrial Arts School for Colored Youth, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 97001563], 1997; Brian Page, Ross Point School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 01000886], 2001; Nils Kerschus, Glenville School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form [NRIS# 03001169], 2003.

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schools and one reformatory, as well as 125 schools in Delaware for industrialist Pierre S. du Pont as a gift to the state's educational system (see Appendix 1). Most of the Delaware schools were small rural schools and nearly two-thirds designated as segregated schools for Blacks. During the 1920s, the firm also designed academic buildings for three state teachers' colleges or normal schools in New Jersey and Connecticut – the State Normal School at Glassboro, New Jersey (today known as Rowan University), the State Normal School at Montclair, New Jersey (today known as Montclair State University) and the State Normal School at New Britain, Connecticut (today known as Central Connecticut State University). Guilbert and Betelle downsized significantly during the depth of the Great Depression in the early to mid-1930s, and Betelle retired in 1939. Weequahic High School was one of the firm's final school projects, completed in 1933.⁴³

In 1932, James O. Betelle wrote in describing new trends in school design for *Architecture* magazine that “the one important thing Europe has contributed is the so-called “Modernistic” style of architecture used in the treatment of the exterior. There is a distinct trend in America to break away from the traditional structural forms. There is merit in this tendency and it is to be encouraged so long as it is not carried to extremes, of which there is no evidence as yet.”⁴⁴ Weequahic High School's Art Deco style clearly reflected Guilbert and Betelle's interpretation of modernism in the realm of school architecture.

History of the Construction of Weequahic High School – By 1930, the population of Newark had reached its peak of 442,337, having grown from 246,070 people in 1900.⁴⁵ Construction of Weequahic High School began in 1932 with the Pellechia Construction Company of Newark selected as the general contractors. Weequahic High School opened for students on September 11, 1933, with 109 classrooms and a projected capacity of 1,350 students. Over 2,000 students attended that first day, suggesting that the Newark Board of Education had underestimated its needs from the start. To relieve crowding, the 9th grade was annexed to both the Chancellor Elementary School and the Hawthorne Avenue School.⁴⁶ September of 1934 began with an enrollment of 2,150 students. To deal with the number of students seventy teachers were employed along with the principal, librarian, two laboratory assistants, four administrative assistants and a pianist.⁴⁷

Weequahic High School was noteworthy enough to deserve an entry in the 1935 edition of *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds*. This offers a useful source of information about architectural aspects of the building that may have interested the yearbook's readers, as well as original uses of

⁴³ “Recent Schools of E. F. Guilbert and Guilbert and Betelle,” *The American School Board Journal* 44 (1912), 19-27; Haddon (1914), 244-263; Betelle (1915), 161-170; Betelle (1919), 25-28, 75-76; “Architect Selected by School Board,” *Newark Evening News* (September 1, 1922); “Art: School Builder,” *TIME Magazine* (August 24, 1931); Betelle (1920): 751-760, 763-767; Betelle (1932), 250-280; “James O. Betelle, 75, Retired Newark Architect,” *Newark Evening News*, June 5, 1954; Brandt (1995): 8-2; August Sieder, Jr., *James Betelle, Where Are You? The Search for a Lost Architect*, online, www.jamesbetelle.com [accessed July 2023].

⁴⁴ Betelle (1932), 251.

⁴⁵ W.M.C. Hunt, “Population: New Jersey; Number of Inhabitants by Counties and Minor Civil Divisions,” *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1930* Department of Commerce, www2.census.gov.

⁴⁶ Bernstein, et al. (1959), 2.

⁴⁷ John H. Logan, “The Weequahic High School in Newark,” *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds* 7 (1935), 65.

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spaces. At the time of its construction, Weequahic High School had an estimated window space to floor area of about 23 percent, which was considered a high percentage and reflecting of Guilbert and Betelle's attention to providing every classroom with natural lights and ventilation (Figure 12). The school also contained steam heating and electric lighting in all the classrooms, and emergency lighting for the auditorium and corridors.⁴⁸ Plans published in the yearbook indicate that well-lit drawing rooms for drafting and art classes were located on the northern most part of the western side of the building for reasons of natural light, and the domestic science department included a cooking room, sewing room and a model apartment with living room, dining room and bathroom.⁴⁹ These rooms still exist but are no longer outfitted for these purposes. Additional facilities included a fourth-floor library (Figure 6), two sound-proof music rooms, full-service lunch room with three seating areas (Figure 10), and a health office, all of which remain as identifiable spaces in the building but no longer serve these purposes.⁵⁰ At the time of construction, the school contained 36 drinking fountains, 1,701 lockers and twelve bathrooms evenly distributed throughout the building.⁵¹

In September 1958, the Pellechia Construction Company finalized Guilbert and Betelle's original building plans with the addition to the rear sections of the fourth floor, which was not built in 1933, presumably to stay within budget. Pellechia added 16 more classrooms bringing the total capacity to 125 classrooms.⁵² In 1976, the cafeteria wing was added to the western side of the building, and the original third-floor cafeteria was renovated to accommodate a new library and media center.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 63-64.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 62.

⁵⁰ The original fourth floor library contained 8,500 school owned books with an additional 1,000 public library books on indefinite loan. Motion picture filmstrips, phonograph records, and tapes were also provided, and books from the City Library could be requested through a weekly delivery system. Source: Bernstein, et al. (1959), 9.

⁵¹ Logan (1935), 62-63.

⁵² Bernstein, et al. (1959), 2.

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B. Local Significance in the Area of Art – “The Enlightenment of Man” W.P.A. Mural

“The Enlightenment of Man” W.P.A. Mural in the Weequahic High School is a work by muralist Michael Lenson that designed for and installed in the building’s lobby in 1939. It is a locally significant example of a period, type and method of artistic expression, referred to herein as the American scene movement and social realism that permeated the art produced by artists working in the mural division of the W.P.A. from 1935 to 1941. The mural was created to be seen in this specific space, not just because the artist had to cut around moldings, vents and stairs. Often, as is clearly the case here, the muralists of this genre created perspectives to work from certain angles that might not be typical straight-on views. “The Enlightenment of Man” circles the main entrance staircases to cover the lobby’s wall surfaces on all four sides. The colors and flow of the composition were intended to lead viewers’ eyes around the room in a certain way, in this instance telling a story of human progress marked by violence and horror. Murals like this were usually done on canvas that was glued to the walls, as is also the case here. That way, the artist could use oils which allowed more subtle effects, and the longer drying time meant sections could be reworked.

The W.P.A. Mural Program and The American Scene Movement – The Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) Federal Arts Project was the first major attempt of government patronage of the arts across the entirety of the United States. The most influential visual art projects occurred at the end of the first and during the second administrations of President Franklin D. Roosevelt corresponding to the Great Depression years of 1935 to 1941. The fall of 1935 brought a range of projects that were organized to preserve and support professional artists in fine art divisions (mural, easel, sculpture, and graphic art), commercial divisions (poster and Index of American Design), and art education and technical divisions.⁵³ The W.P.A. supplied all materials, including canvas and brushes, and payroll was eighteen dollars per week, which was a living wage about equivalent to minimum wage today. Not only did the program provide much needed work to practicing artists, but employed those with no prior classical training, producing artists that would not have grown or developed otherwise.⁵⁴ Some of the most prominent American artists acquired their name from the W.P.A.-sponsored work, including Mark Rothko (1903-1970), Arshile Gorky (1904-1948), Jackson Pollock (1912-1956) and Charles Alston (1907-1977). By 1936, over 5,000 artists were employed, more than 100 small town community art centers and galleries were established, and an estimated 2,566 murals were produced.⁵⁵ However, the precise amount of federal funding, and the number of visual art pieces created is unclear due to the absence of formal records and the lack of definitive breakdown of projects by state.⁵⁶

In New Jersey, the W.P.A. Easel and Mural Division employed three muralist supervising artists: Lorene Trainer, George Kuner and Michael Lenson. Lenson operated out of the W.P.A. workshop on Halsey Street in Newark. He supervised approximately fifteen murals by various artists and designed a handful of his own. Additionally, Lenson’s division installed decorative glass in hospitals, hook rugs and easel paintings in

⁵³ "W.P.A. Federal Art Project," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (April 4, 2019), <https://www.britannica.com/>.

⁵⁴ Michael Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964), Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

⁵⁵ "W.P.A. Federal Art Project" (2019).

⁵⁶ Fred B. Adelson, “How Depression-Era Art Lives On Across the Garden State,” *NJ Monthly* (April 16, 2021), <https://njmonthly.com/>.

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government buildings, and silkscreened posters for the government in World War II.⁵⁷ One of the most prominent muralists active in New Jersey was Ben Shahn (b.1898-d.1969), a Lithuanian immigrant who painted “Jersey Homesteads” in 1936-1937 in the Roosevelt Public School in the Borough of Roosevelt (Supplemental Figure 15). The mural depicts the Jewish immigrant experience and the American labor movement. It is by most measures the best known of the American scene movement and social realism murals in the State of New Jersey.

Lenson’s “Enlightenment of Man” mural in the Weequahic High School is representative of an art movement described in scholarship as the American scene movement and social realism, which was a hallmark of many of the W.P.A. muralists. The American scene movement flourished between the world wars and attracted artists who wanted to move away from the abstract, avant-garde, modernist styles, mostly originating in Europe and influencing many artists in the United States. Although the American scene movement could occur in almost any artistic medium, it was mostly found in paintings and reached its widest audiences in murals created for large public spaces. Common to the composition of the murals were oversized human figures, often depicted within landscapes familiar to American viewers. While many of the leading American scene artists such as Thomas Hart Benton and John Steuart Curry were classically trained and had attended school in Europe, their goal was to create an art form that was uniquely American. These artists tended to focus on rural subjects and America’s agrarian roots, believing that urban American life was the source of many social problems. Other muralists such as the highly influential Mexican muralist Diego Rivera took the social ills head on, creating murals that depicted human figures heroically struggling in industrial and urban settings. The social realism of these murals often had less than reassuring messages regarding the dehumanizing nature of technology and science, and the artists sought to document the human cost of political and economic tragedies. “The Enlightenment of Man” by Michal Lenson clearly falls into this latter variation of the American scene movement.⁵⁸

Michael Lenson: Life, Work and Comparative Examples – Michael Lenson was born into a Jewish family in 1903 in the town of Ulla, Russia, an area located in the Jewish Pale of Settlement. Moving to Galich, his family was not subjected to the anti-Semitic violence occurring in Belarus and Ukraine. However, in fear that Lenson, age eight, and his seven brothers would be drafted into the Russian military, his family emigrated to New York City around 1911. Lenson early exhibited an aptitude for artistic pursuits. In 1928, Lenson, then age 25, received \$10,000 from the Chaloner Foundation to study art abroad. For four years, he attended the University of London at Slade School and Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. His time in London proved to be valuable as he was exposed to mural art and technique by assisting Colin Unwin Gill, a British muralist and portraitist best

⁵⁷ Michael Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964).

⁵⁸ Diana L. Linden, *Ben Shahn’s New Deal Murals: Jewish Identity and the American Scene* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2015); Heather Becker, *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive- and WPA-era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943* (San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2002); Jody Paterson, *Modernism for the Masses: Painters, Politics and Public Murals in 1930s New York* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2020); “American Scene Painting (c.1925-45),” *Encyclopedia of Art History*, on-line at www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/american-scene-painting.htm [accessed July 2023]; “Social Realism (c.1930-45),” *Encyclopedia of Art History*, on-line at www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/social-realism.htm [accessed July 2023].

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known for his depictions of scenes from the First World War. There are parallels between Lenson's "The Enlightenment of Man" and Gill's best-known work, "Heavy Artillery," in the collection of the Imperial War Museum in London (Supplemental Figure 16).⁵⁹ In 1932, Lenson returned to New York City and eventually sought employment at the New York W.P.A. around 1935. Upon rejection, he moved to Newark, and gained a position with the Easel and Mural Division of the New Jersey W.P.A. Soon after, Lenson received a promotion and operated as the Assistant State Supervisor of the division until the program's demise in the early 1940s.

Evidence of Lenson's and other New Jersey W.P.A. muralists' projects are scarce, as many of the walls have either been refinished or removed. According to the New Deal Art Registry, a website devoted to the subject, there are thirty public W.P.A.-era murals surviving in New Jersey, seven of which are in Newark, and three of those seven are accredited to Michael Lenson.⁶⁰ In addition to "The Enlightenment of Man," the other two of his extant murals are "The History of Newark" in the Newark Municipal Council Chambers in City Hall and "The Four Freedoms" in the Fourteenth Avenue School (Supplemental Figures 17-18). "The History of Newark," completed in 1941, is similar to "The Enlightenment of Man" in that it illustrates a progression of events, in this instance from the colonization of Newark through its development from small agricultural village to large industrial city. Human figures are shown undertaking various everyday activities including farming, grinding corn, shoemaking and pouring iron. "The Four Freedoms," completed in 1942, is a four-wall mural depicting human figures enjoying freedom of speech, freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom of worship. "The Four Freedoms" was initially created following President Roosevelt's "four freedoms" state of the union address in January 1941. It clearly draws inspiration from the American scene movement, placing its human subjects in rural landscapes that include farm buildings and agricultural crops. In 1944, Lenson's illustrations were published in a booklet entitled *The President's Speech Illustrated by Nineteen Artists*.⁶¹

Lenson is known to have completed four other murals during his time in the W.P.A., none of which survive in 2023. "The History of New Jersey" was Lenson's first and largest W.P.A. project at 16½ feet by 75 feet, spanning the dining room wall at the Essex Mountain Sanatorium in Verona (Supplemental Figure 19). The mural, depicting the progress of agriculture and industry in New Jersey, took two years to complete from 1936 to 1938. It was lost years prior to the building's demolition in 2002. "Emancipation Proclamation," also non-extant, was installed in the Charlton Street School in Newark around 1942 (Supplemental Figure 20). This two-part mural depicts Abraham Lincoln juxtaposed with a Black family breaking the shackles of slavery and holding a copy of the proclamation and Frederick Douglass juxtaposed with Black soldiers of the Union Army freeing a mother and child. This mural has a more illustrative quality that differs from Lenson's other W.P.A. work because it was left as a series of black outlines with no in-filling of color. Lenson also undertook a mural in Newark's Chancellor Avenue Elementary School, next door to the Weequahic High School (Supplemental Figure 21). No longer extant in 2023, it contained no human figures but an atmospheric scene of clouds,

⁵⁹ Barry Lenson, *Michael Lenson (1903-1971): A Portrait* (New Jersey: Lenson Publications, 2020).

⁶⁰ *New Deal Art Registry*, www.newdealartregistry.com [accessed July 2023]. The other four W.P.A. murals in Newark are attributed to Domenico Mortellito (b.1906-d.1994) who created multiple paintings on ceramic tile along the Newark Subway Line, each depicting scenes of the Morris Canal.

⁶¹ Michael Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964). Norman Rockwell's paintings of "The Four Freedoms" are likely the most recognizable of the artworks created to celebrate the speech.

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tornados and lightning. Most notably, the mural surrounded an imbedded three-dimensional model of the earth. Another Lenson mural which does survive is "Mining" (Supplemental Figure 22). This American scene movement mural depicting coal miners was completed by Lenson in 1942 and installed in the Mount Hope Post Office in Mount Hope, West Virginia. It is the only known example of his W.P.A. work to survive outside of New Jersey.⁶²

In the years following the W.P.A., Lenson spent time teaching, painting in his home studio in Nutley, New Jersey, and exhibiting his work. From 1944 to 1946, Lenson was appointed director of the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts. He taught at Rutgers University-Newark, Fairleigh Dickinson University and the Montclair Museum Art School (1956-71). His work was shown nationally among many high-esteem museums and galleries, including the Albright Art Gallery (Buffalo, New York), the Carriage Institute (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), the Trenton State Museum (Trenton, New Jersey) and the Butler Institute of American Art (Youngstown, Ohio).⁶³

"The Enlightenment of Man" Mural Process and Technique – Michael Lenson's process as related to the Weequahic High School mural were not found among W.P.A. archival records; however, one can assume "The Enlightenment of Man" followed the same procedure as his other large-scale murals. He began most of his projects by studying the client's suggested theme. "I spent time in the library. I found out many things. But the history, you know, the research done, of course, was essential. We found out many fascinating things. I mean, I can go on discuss the content of such a mural as that which we did at the city hall, for instance, about the revolutionary history of New Jersey very few people know. Part from just the painting of the mural, you'll get yourself an education in the process."⁶⁴ Designs were then sketched, corresponding to the chosen wall, and approved by clients and stakeholders. Sections of the sketch were made into slides in order to be projected onto the canvas or oilcloth pinned within the W.P.A. workshop. Instructed by Lenson, his assistants traced the entire image in outline with charcoal. Assistants filled in the design with flat colors in a paint-by-numbers format, as each shape numbered was consistent with jars of hand-mixed oil paint. Once dry, the canvas or oil cloth was transferred to the site and affixed to the wall with adhesive and hardware. Details and definition were all added by Lenson at the final location (Figure 9).⁶⁵ Lenson and his team painted most of "The Enlightenment of Man" mural at the Federal Arts Project studios on Halsey Street in Newark, New Jersey.⁶⁶ Photographic evidence suggests, however, that the mural was finished within the Weequahic High School lobby.

⁶² Michael Lenson created other murals that have yet to be found. Those include "New Jersey Technology and Commerce" in the New Jersey Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair, and commissions for the Electronic Corporation of America in New York City, Douglas College on the Rutgers University New Brunswick campus, and a wine-themed mural for a liquor distributor in New Jersey. Sources: Michael Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964); Lenson (2020).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Lenson, Interview by Harlan Buddington Phillips (1964); Barry Lenson, Interview by Carly Adler (September 2, 2022).

⁶⁶ Lenson (2020), 229-230.

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SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

From 1933 until the 1960s, Weequahic High School was regarded as one of the best schools in New Jersey. In August 1950, the school was rated as “one of the most outstanding high schools in the country” by the Commission of Secondary Schools of the Middle Atlantic States Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. On December 17, 1963, Weequahic High School was ranked number one in New Jersey and 56th in the nation in the number of graduates who had earned a Ph.D. during the preceding five years.

Eleanor Roosevelt— In 1951, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt addressed more than 1,500 students at an assembly in the Weequahic High School Auditorium.

Max Herzberg, Weequahic High School's First Principal—Max Herzberg was the first principal at the Weequahic High School and remained there for eighteen years. He selected the school colors, orange and brown, before the building opened for students.⁶⁷ Prior to the position, he was editor of the *Newark Evening News*. Additionally, he was editor of the newspaper's Sunday Book Page from 1947 onward.

Distinguished Alumni— Five graduates, in particular, experienced great success in their professional careers. They include Muriel Fox (Class of 1944, co-founder of the National Organization of Women); Maurice Schonfeld (Class of 1949, co-founder of the CNN network); Philip Roth (Class of 1950, Pulitzer-Prize-winning author; Alvin Attles (Class of 1955, National Basketball Association championship coach); and James Oliver Horton (Class of 1961, professor emeritus and scholar on African American history).

⁶⁷ Bernstein, et al. (1959): 3.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Weequahic High School is situated on Block 3719, Lot 1 in the City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey. The property is a roughly rectangular shape bounded by Chancellor Avenue on the south, Aldine Street on the east, Vassar Avenue on the north, and the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School on the west.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary contains the Weequahic High School building footprint and grounds to the street right-of-way on Chancellor Avenue, Aldine Street and Vassar Avenue. The footprint is inclusive of the original building footprint and grounds of 1932-33 and 1958 and the one-story cafeteria wing added to the west side of the building in 1976. The boundary excludes the Ronald G. Stone Community Gymnasium built in 2010 on an adjacent tax lot (Block 3719.01, Lot 23) and the minor corridor connecting the Weequahic High School's northwest ground-floor rear doors to the community gymnasium. The Ronald G. Stone Community Gymnasium is a separate building that is only a single floor, as compared to Weequahic High School's four floors, with a different higher floor height, separate circulation patterns, a separate main entrance to the north on Vassar Avenue, and its own mechanical systems independent of the high school building. The boundary has a slight jog in the northwest corner of the lot to exclude the corridor.

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Photograph Log

Name of Property: Weequahic High School

City or Vicinity: Newark

County: Essex State: New Jersey

Photographer: Matthew Gosser, Patrick Harshbarger, Rachel Craft, Carly Adler

Date Photographed: January 10, 2019; April 20, 2022; April 20, 2022; August 22, 2022

Current Repository of Photographs: Hunter Research, Inc., Trenton, New Jersey.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph 1. Weequahic High School, oblique view of the southern elevation looking northeast on Chancellor Avenue. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 2. Weequahic High School, view of the eastern elevation on Aldine Street. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 3. Weequahic High School, oblique view of the rear façade (north elevation), looking east on Vassar Avenue. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 4. Weequahic High School and Chancellor Avenue School shared alley entrance at the south elevation, oblique view of Weequahic High School west elevation. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 5. Weequahic High School flagpole, the corner of Chancellor Avenue and Aldine Street, looking north. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 6. Detailed view of the Weequahic High School front entry bay, south elevation. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 7. Front-facing façade (south), west entrance and stairwell tower. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 8. Column detail, Weequahic High School front entry bay (south). Photographed by Matthew Gosser on January 10, 2019.

Photograph 9. Detailed view of the Weequahic High School front entry bay (south) top. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

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Photograph 10. Detailed view of terra cotta frieze, front-facing façade (south). Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 11. Detailed view of geometric iron grate-work, south elevation. Photographed by Matthew Gosser on January 10, 2019.

Photograph 12. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking west. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 13. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking northwest. Photographed by Matthew Gosser on January 10, 2019.

Photograph 14. Weequahic High School main lobby, second floor, looking east. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 15. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking southwest. Photographed by Matthew Gosser on January 10, 2019.

Photograph 16. Weequahic High School secondary lobby, looking north. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 17. Weequahic High School auditorium gallery, looking south toward the entrances. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 18. Auditorium chair detail. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 19. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking northwest toward the stage. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 20. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking north toward the stage from the second-floor balcony. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 21. Weequahic High School auditorium, pendant luminaire detail. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 22. Detailed view of the auditorium plaster border detail. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 23. Senior gymnasium wing, looking northeast. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 24. Cafeteria wing interior, looking east. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 25. Media Center, third floor. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

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Photograph 26. Classroom #118, representative of classrooms throughout building. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 27. Clerestory window detail, representative of classrooms throughout building. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 28. Weequahic High School main office. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 29. Main office filing cabinet detail. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 30. Main office clock/call system detail. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 31. Oblique view of second floor principal's office (left) and main office (right) doors. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 32. Weequahic High School corridor, representative corridor looking west on third floor. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 33. Water fountain alcove detail, third floor, representative of alcoves in hallways of all floors. Photographed by Rachel Craft on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 34. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, southeast corner. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 35. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the east wall. Photographed by Matthew Gosser January 10, 2019.

Photograph 36. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, east wall, detailed view of Michael Lenson's signature. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

Photograph 37. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, detailed view of the east wall. Photographed by Carly Adler on August 22, 2022.

Photograph 38. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the north wall, right side. Photographed by Carly Adler on August 22, 2022.

Photograph 39. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the north wall, left side. Photographed by Carly Adler on August 22, 2022.

Photograph 40. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the west wall. Photographed by Carly Adler on August 22, 2022.

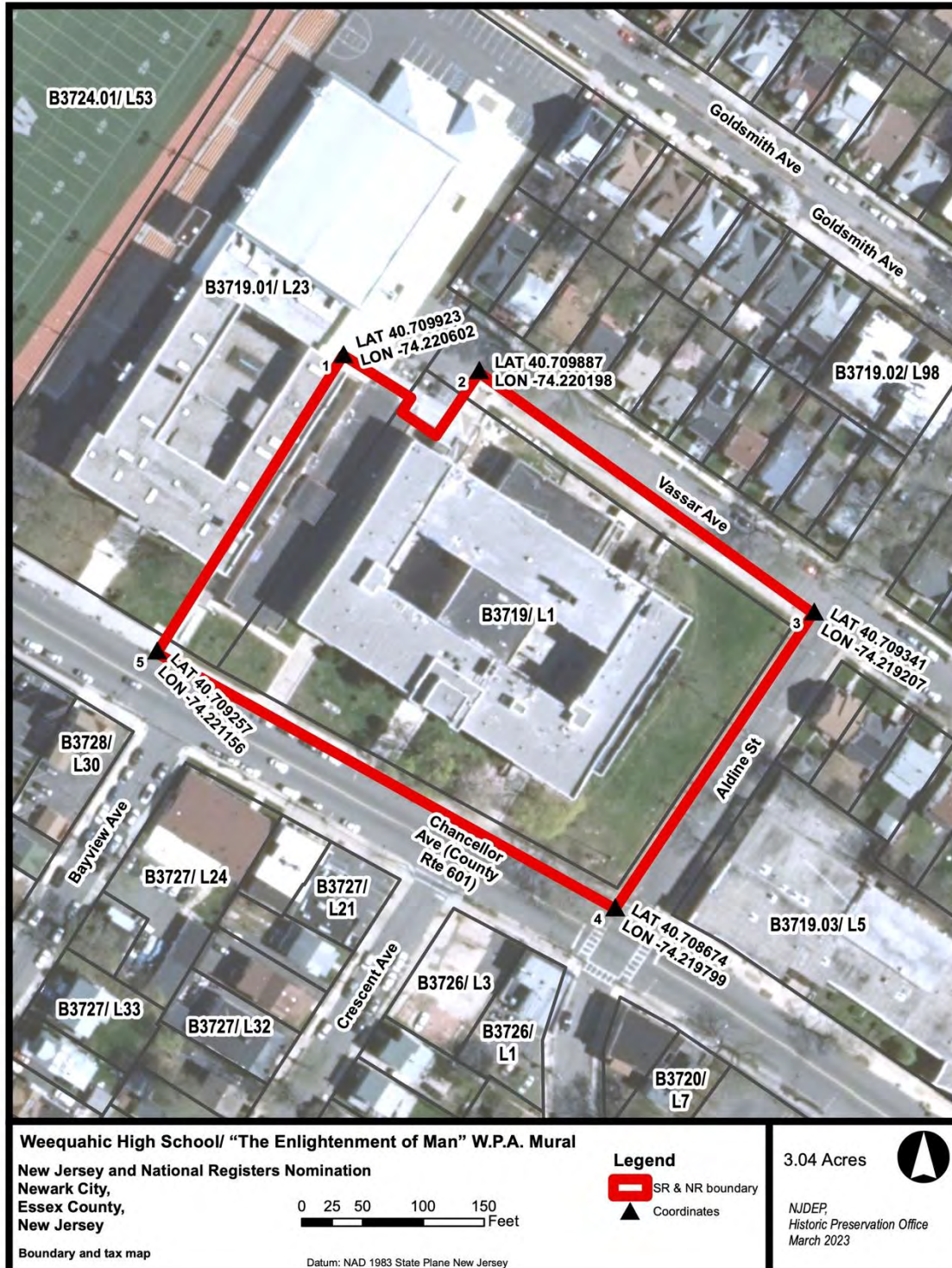
Photograph 41. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, southwest corner. Photographed by Patrick Harshbarger on April 20, 2022.

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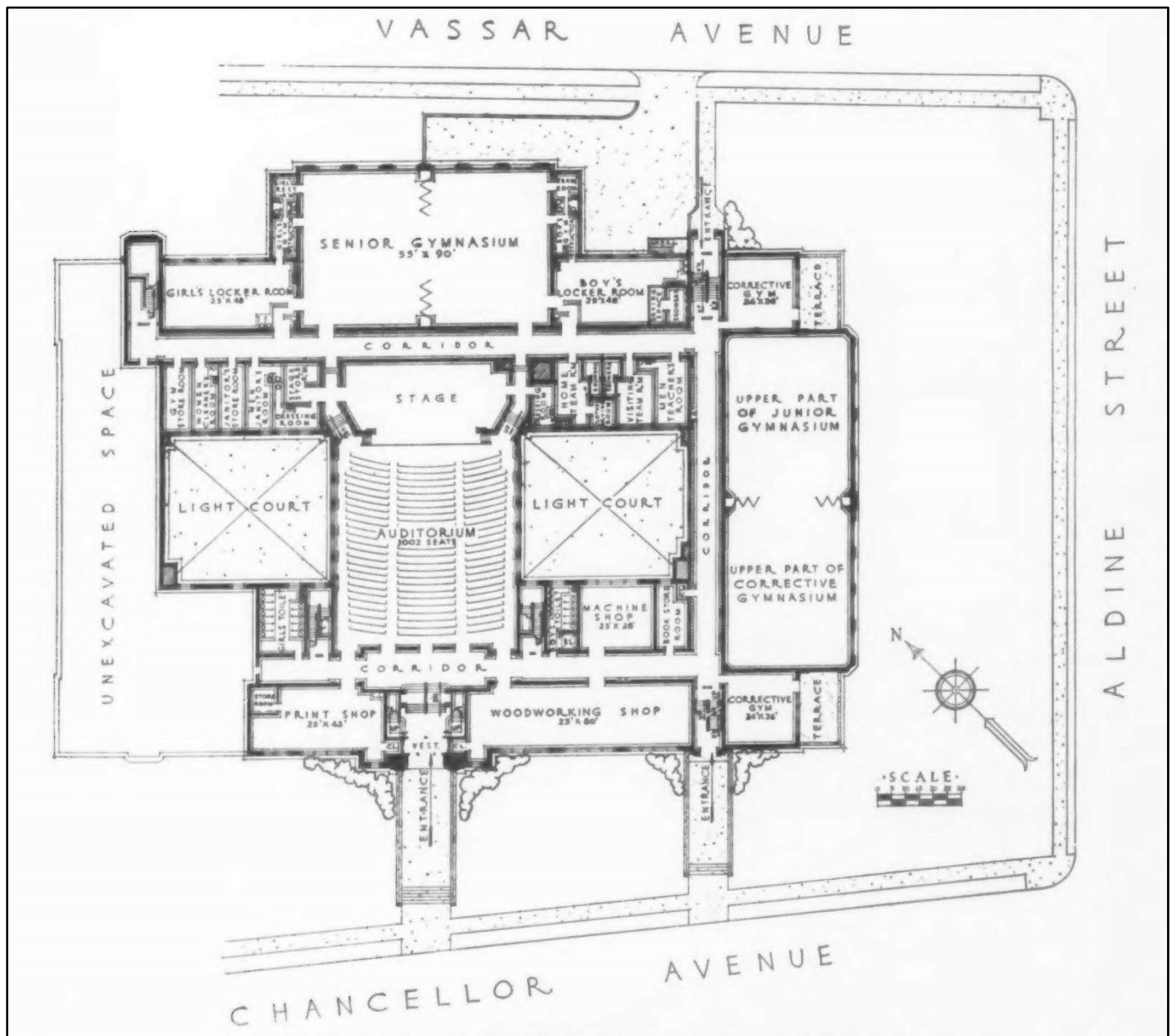


Figure 1. Guilbert and Betelle. Weequahic High School first-floor plan. 1932. Source: "The Weequahic High School in Newark," *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds*, 1935.

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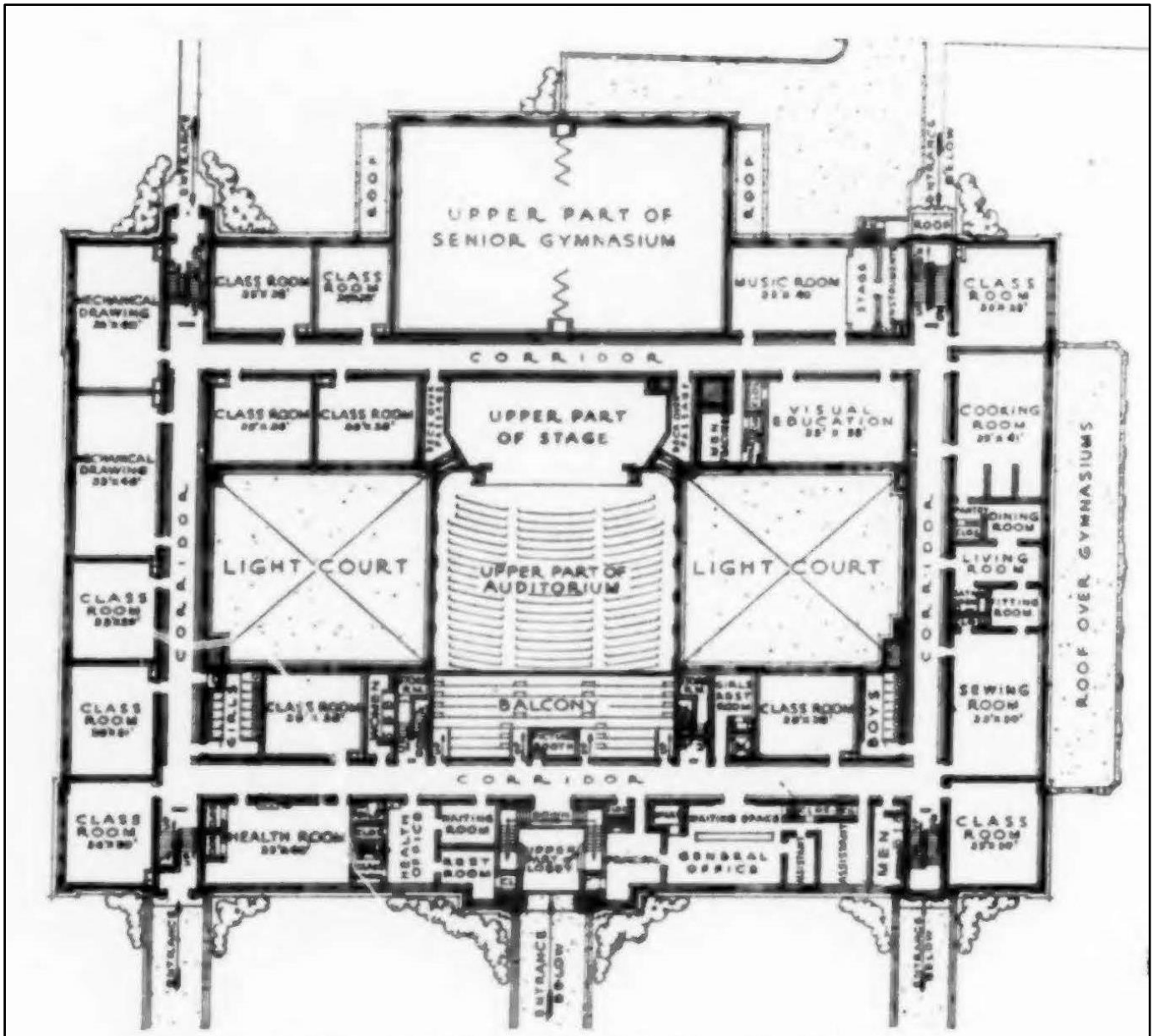


Figure 2. Guilbert and Betelle. Weequahic High School second-floor plan. 1932. Source: "The Weequahic High School in Newark," *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds*, 1935.

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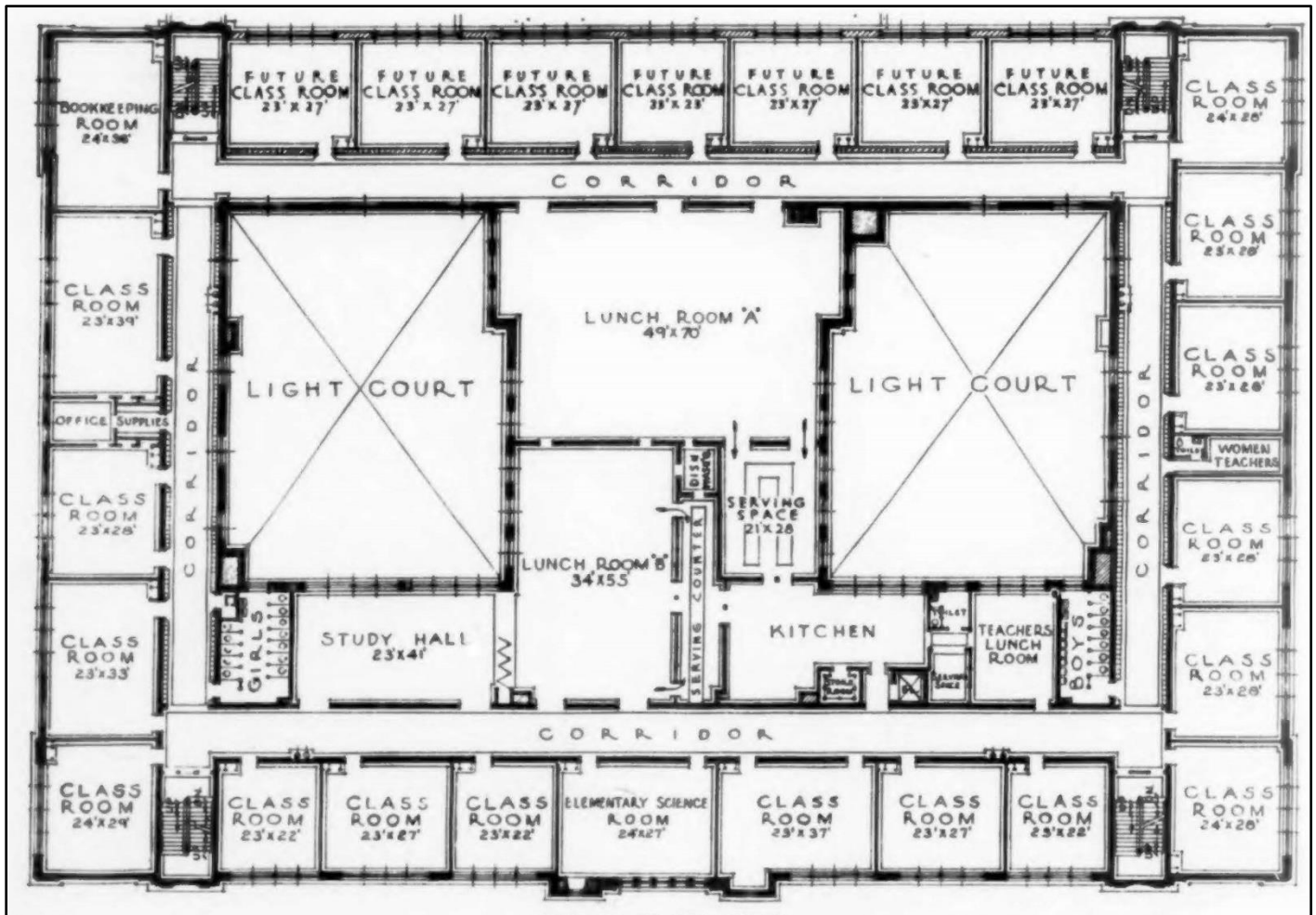


Figure 3. Guilbert and Betelle. Weequahic High School third-floor plan. 1932. Source: "The Weequahic High School in Newark," *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds*, 1935.

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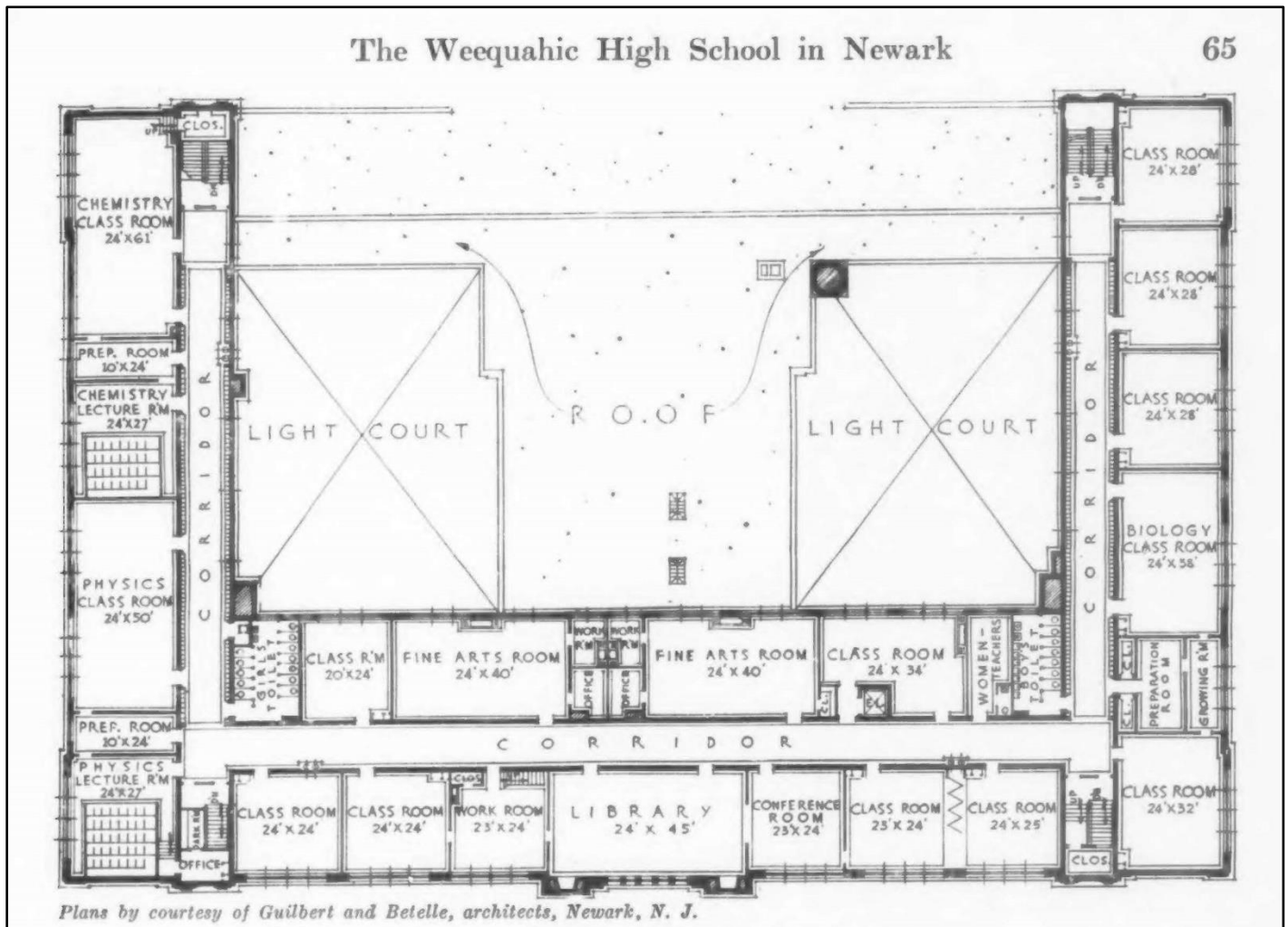


Figure 4. Guilbert and Betelle. Weequahic High School fourth floor plan. 1932. Source: "The Weequahic High School in Newark," *The American School and University: A Yearbook Devoted to the Design, Construction, Equipment, Utilization, and Maintenance of the Educational Buildings and Grounds*, 1935.

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Figure 5. Weequahic High School. Postcard. *Circa* 1933. Oblique view of the southern/western elevations from Chancellor Avenue. Source: Newark Public Schools Historical Preservation Committee.

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Figure 6. Weequahic High School library. 1934. Source: *The Calumet Weequahic High School Newspaper*, February 13, 1934.

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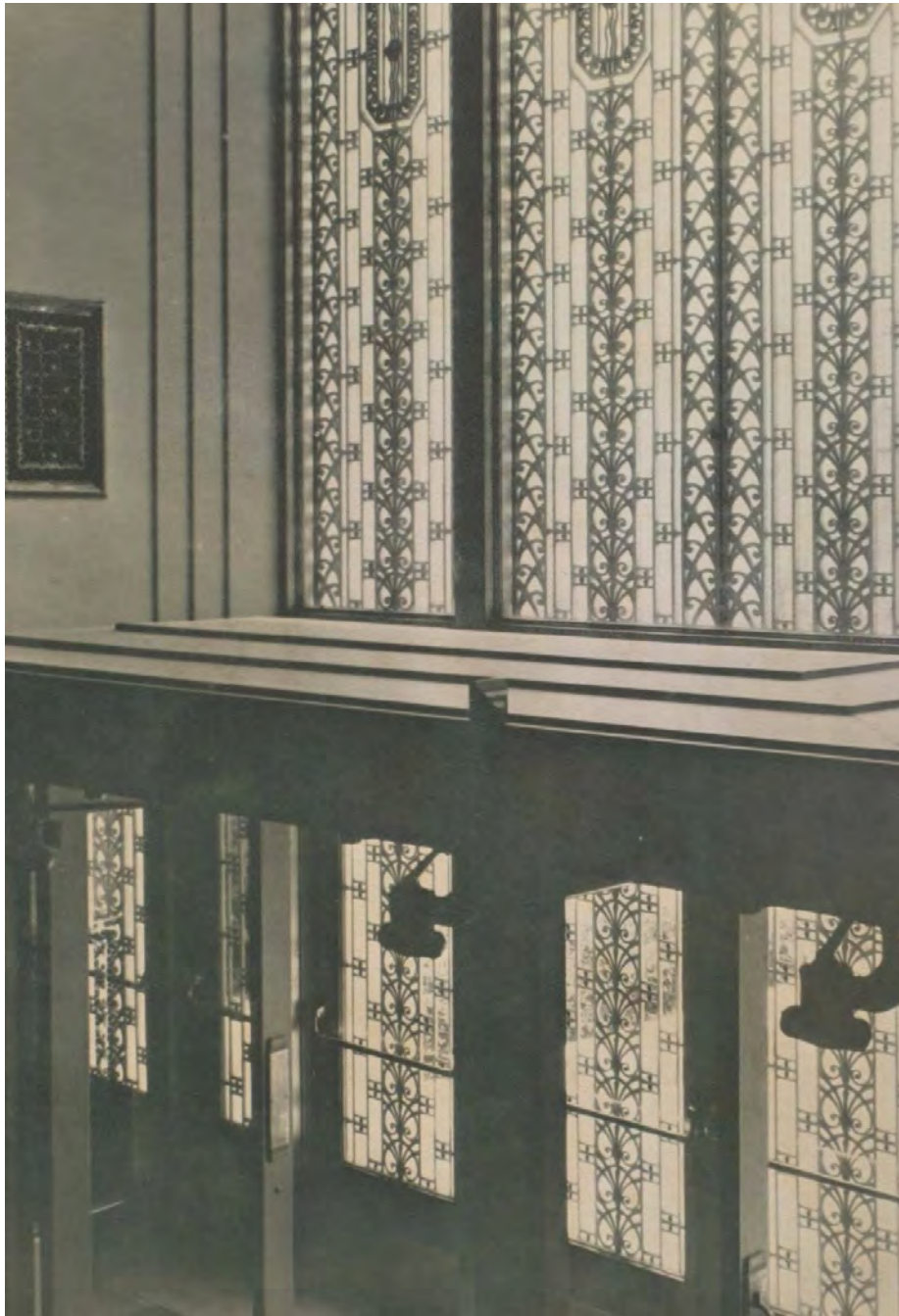


Figure 7. Interior view of Weequahic High School southern elevation main entry detail. 1936. Source: *The Legend Weequahic High School Yearbook*, June 1936.

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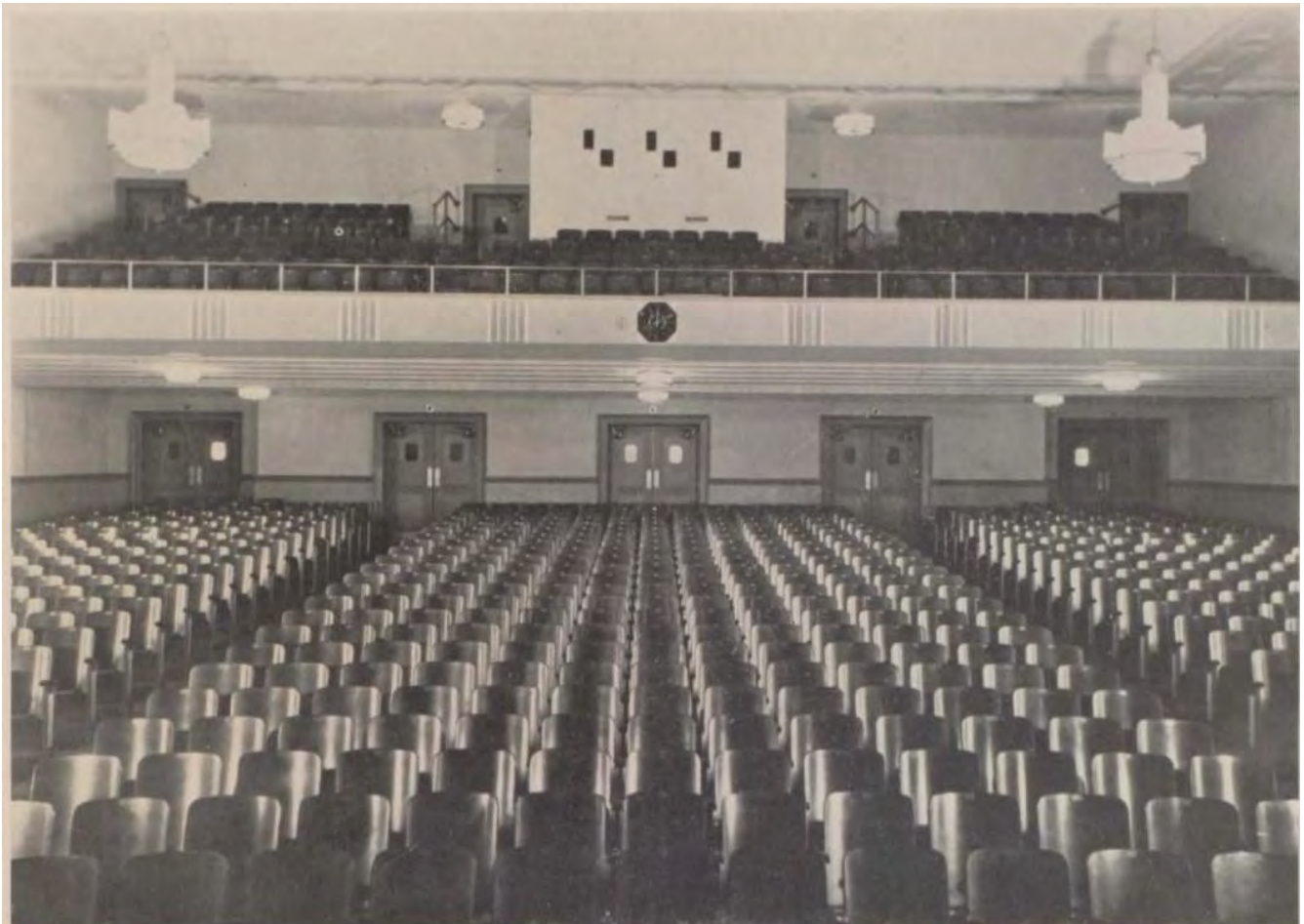


Figure 8. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking south toward the entrances. 1936. Source: *The Legend Weequahic High School Yearbook*, 1936.

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Figure 9. Michael Lenson (right) painting "The Enlightenment of Man" mural in the Weequahic High School lobby. 1939. Source: *The Calumet Weequahic High School Newspaper*, January 12, 1939.

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Figure 10. Weequahic High School students at the cafeteria service bar. May 1944. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Figure 11. Girls' Archery in the Senior Gymnasium wing. 1944. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Figure 12. Weequahic High School classroom. 1948. Photograph is labeled "Shakespeare Theatre Construction with Mr. Lewin, May 1948." Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Figure 13. Weequahic Highway School chemistry laboratory. 1948. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Figure 14. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking north toward the stage. A Music Tribute to Thomas F. McHugh on May 1, 1955. Photographed by Almon W. Johnston. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Figure 15. Weequahic High School. *Circa 1961*. Oblique view of the southern/eastern elevations from the corner of Chancellor Avenue and Aldine Street. Source: *The Legend Weequahic High School Yearbook*, June 1961.

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Figure 16. Weequahic High School southern elevation main entrance. 1971. Source: *The Legend Weequahic High School Yearbook*, June 1971.

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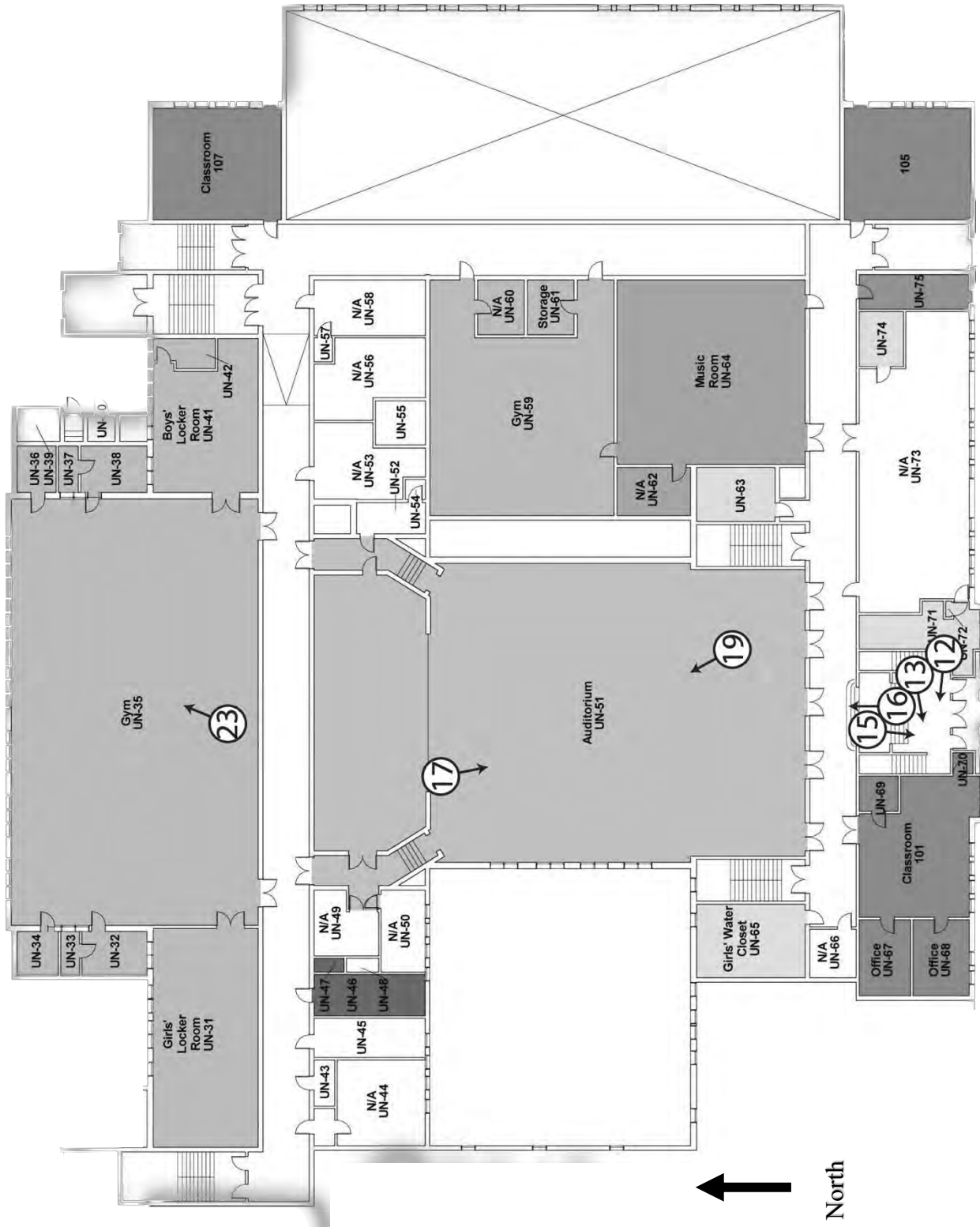
Photograph Key Map (Exterior Photographs).

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Weequahic High School, First Floor Plan and Interior Photograph Key. Source: Newark Board of Education 2023.
Not to Scale.

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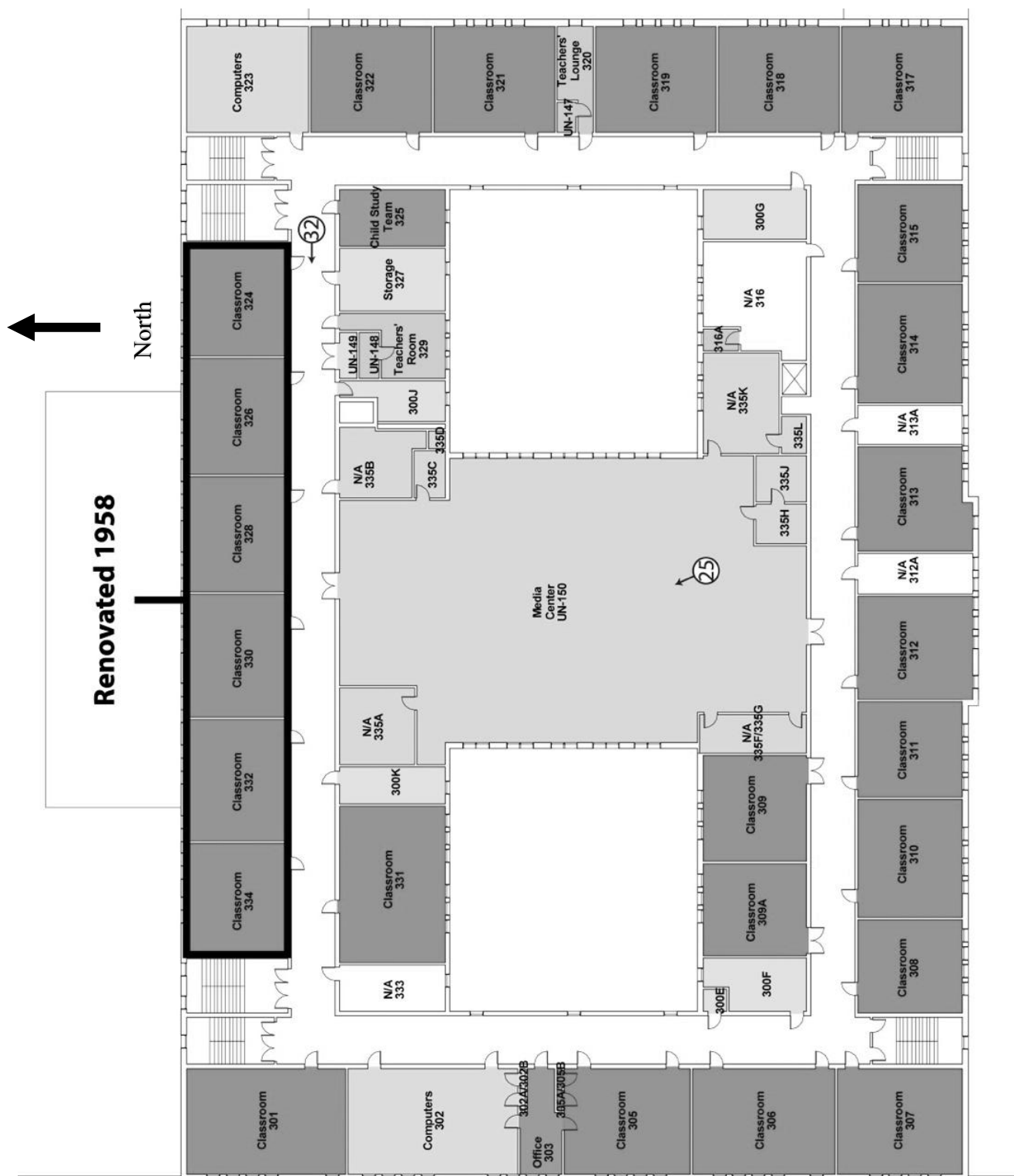
Weequahic High School, Second Floor Plan and Interior Photograph Key. Source: Newark Board of Education 2023.
Not to Scale.

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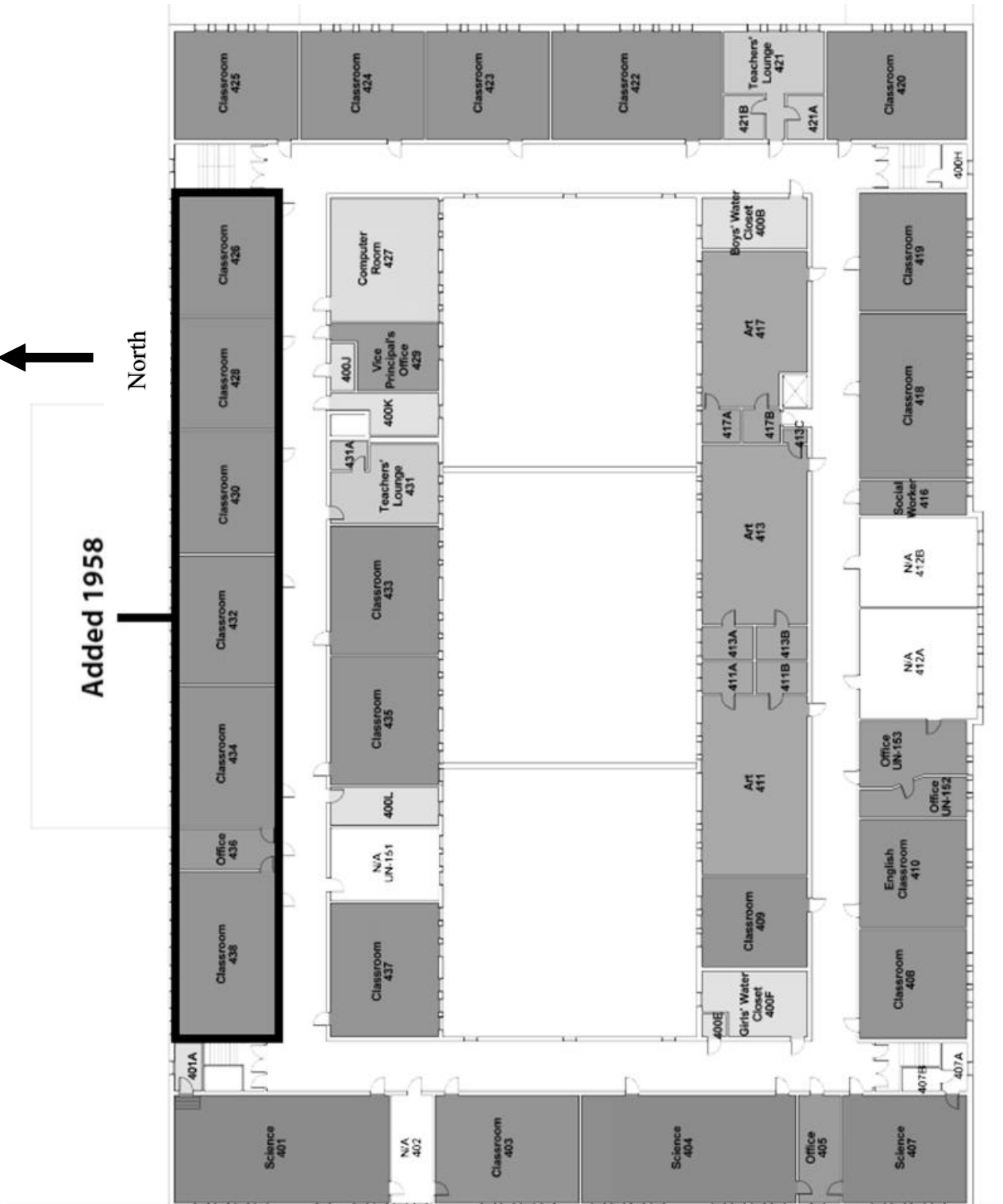
Weequahic High School, Third Floor Plan and Interior Photograph Key. Source: Newark Board of Education 2023.
Not to Scale.

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Weequahic High School, Fourth Floor Plan and Interior Photograph Key. Source: Newark Board of Education 2023.
Not to Scale.

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Photograph 1. Weequahic High School, oblique view of the southern elevation looking northeast on Chancellor Avenue.

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Photograph 2. Weequahic High School, view of the eastern elevation on Aldine Street.

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Photograph 3. Weequahic High School, oblique view of the rear façade (north elevation), looking east on Vassar Avenue. The connecting corridor to the athletic center at lower right is excluded from the nominated resource's boundaries.

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Photograph 4. Weequahic High School and Chancellor Avenue School shared alley entrance at the south elevation, oblique view of Weequahic High School west elevation. At center of view is the cafeteria wing addition of 1976.

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Photograph 5. Weequahic High School flagpole, the corner of Chancellor Avenue and Aldine Street, looking north.

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Photograph 6. Detailed view of the Weequahic High School front entry bay, south elevation.

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Photograph 7. Front-facing façade (south), west entrance and stairwell tower.

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Photograph 8. Column detail, Weequahic High School front entry bay (south).

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Photograph 9. Detailed view of the Weequahic High School front entry bay (south) top.

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Photograph 10. Detailed view of terra cotta frieze, front-facing façade (south).

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Photograph 11. Detailed view of geometric iron grate-work, south elevation.

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Photograph 12. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking west.

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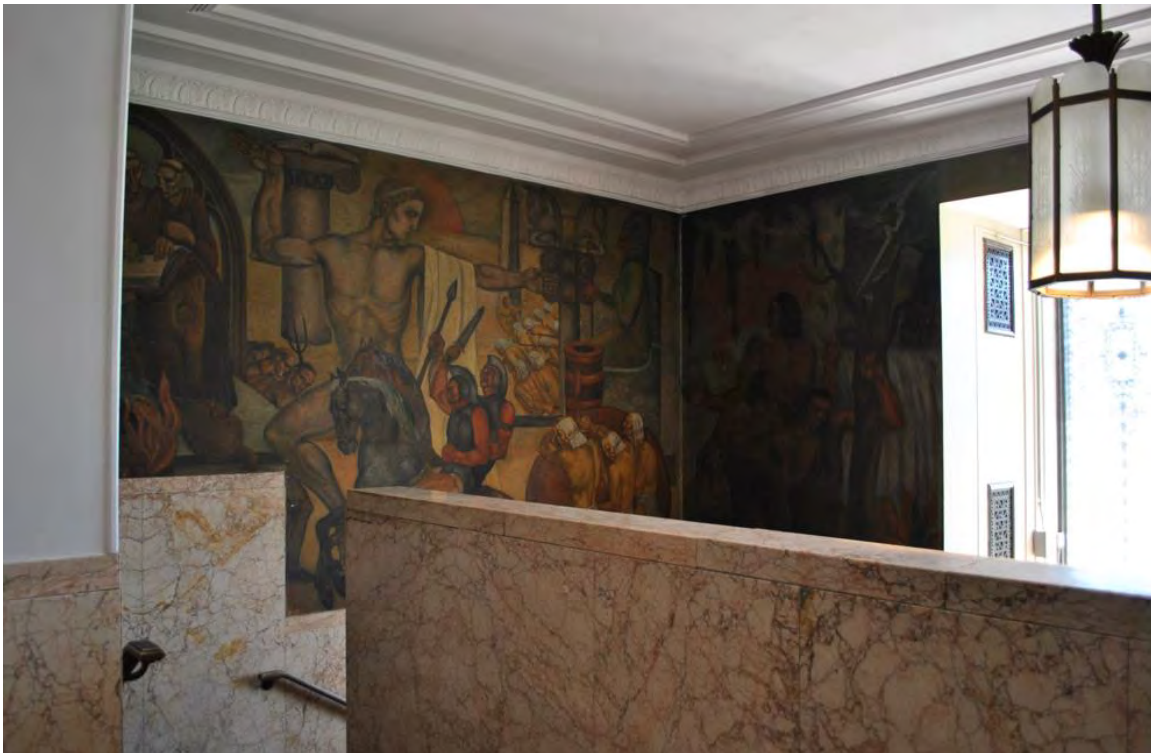
Photograph 13. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking northwest.

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Photograph 14. Weequahic High School main lobby, second floor, looking east.

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Photograph 15. Weequahic High School main lobby, looking southwest.

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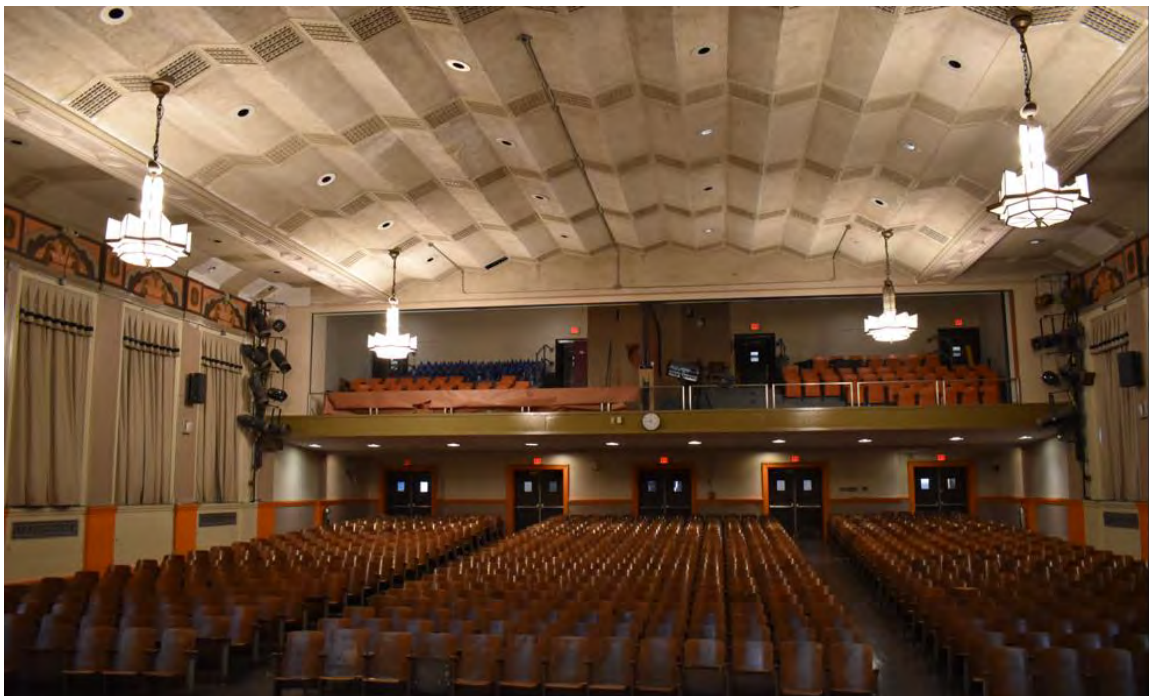
Photograph 16. Weequahic High School secondary lobby, looking north.

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Photograph 17. Weequahic High School auditorium gallery, looking south toward the entrances.

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Photograph 18. Auditorium chair detail.

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Photograph 19. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking northwest toward the stage.

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Photograph 20. Weequahic High School auditorium, looking north toward the stage from the second-floor balcony.

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Photograph 21. Weequahic High School auditorium,
pendant luminaire detail.

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Photograph 22. Detailed view of the auditorium plaster border detail.

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Photograph 23. Senior gymnasium wing, looking northeast.

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Photograph 24. Cafeteria wing interior, looking east.

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Photograph 25. Media Center, third floor.

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Photograph 26. Classroom #118, representative of classrooms throughout building.

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Photograph 27. Clerestory window detail, representative of classrooms throughout building.

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Photograph 28. Weequahic High School main office.

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Photograph 29. Main office filing cabinet detail.

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Photograph 30. Main office clock/call system detail.

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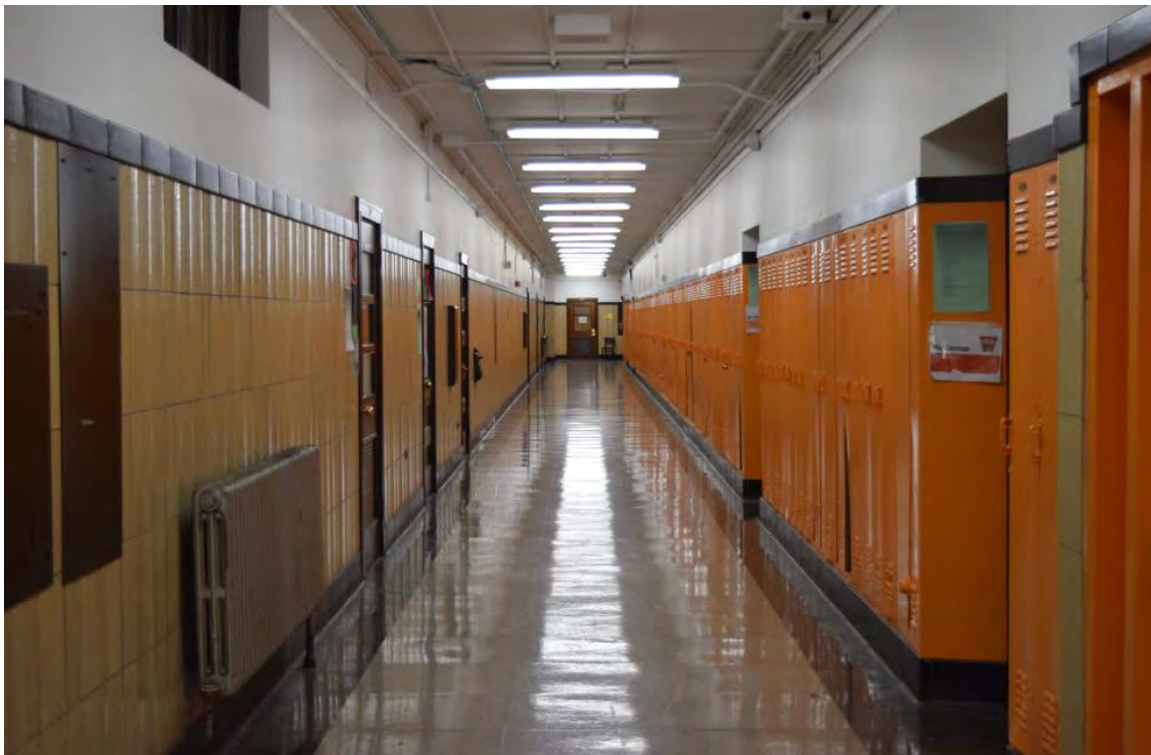
Photograph 31. Oblique view of second floor principal's office (left) and main office (right) doors.

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Photograph 32. Weequahic High School corridor, representative corridor looking west on third floor.

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Photograph 33. Water fountain alcove detail, third floor,
representative of alcoves in hallways of all floors.

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Photograph 34. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural,
Weequahic High School main lobby, southeast corner.

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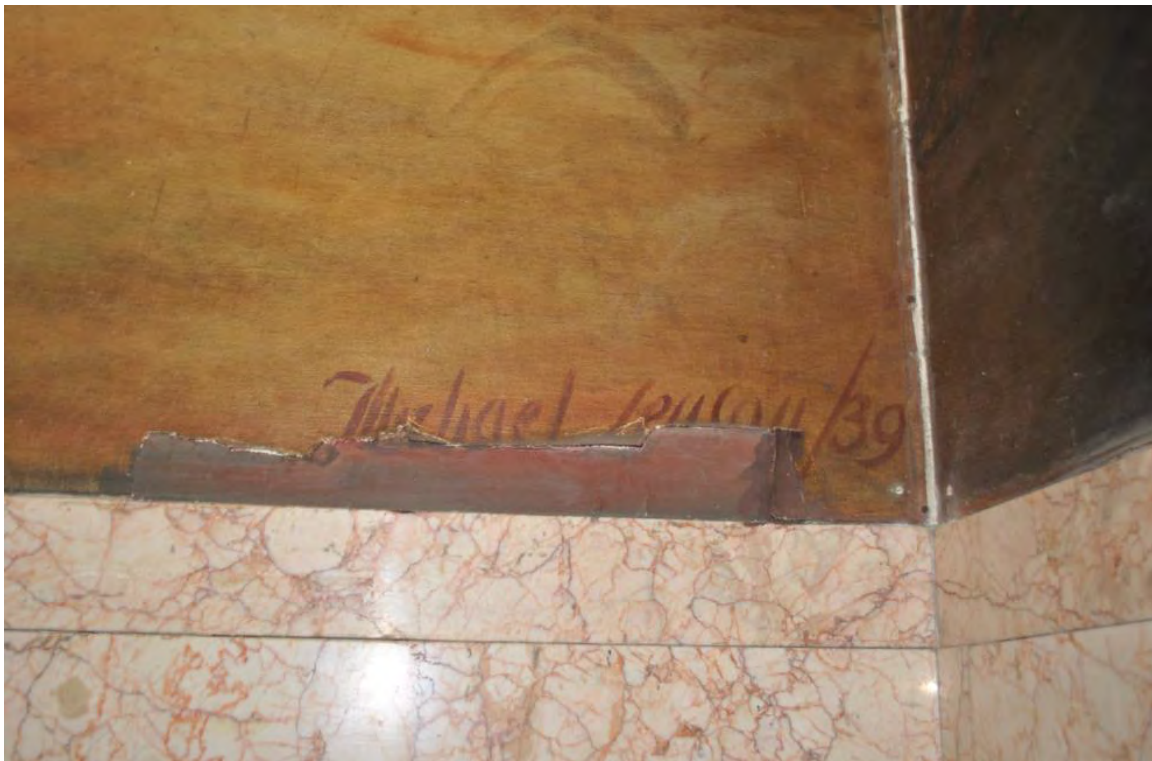
Photograph 35. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the east wall.

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Photograph 36. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, east wall, detailed view of Michael Lenson's signature.

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Photograph 37. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, detailed view of the east wall.

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Photograph 38. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the north wall, right side.

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Photograph 39. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the north wall, left side.

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Photograph 40. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, oblique view of the west wall.

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Photograph 41. "The Enlightenment of Man" mural, Weequahic High School main lobby, southwest corner.

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Supplemental Figure 1: South Street School, City of Newark. 1884. This school was typical of those built during the late Victorian period. Note the wing added to the rear to increase capacity. Source: Newark Public Schools Historic Preservation Committee.

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Supplemental Figure 2. Boylan Street School, 15 Boylan Street, Newark, New Jersey. Designed by Simpson & Rolston, completed in 1929. Source: Google 2023.

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Supplemental Figure 3. Essex County Girls Vocational School, *circa* 1932, Newark, New Jersey. Designed by Guilbert & Betelle in 1928, completed 1930. Source: James O. Betelle, "The Trend in School Building Design" *Architecture* 65, no.5 (May 1932): 265

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Supplemental Figure 4. Chancellor Avenue Elementary School, 321 Chancellor Avenue, Newark, New Jersey. Designed by Frank Grad, completed in 1930. Source: Carly Adler, photographer, August 2022.

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Supplemental Figure 5. Ivy Hill Elementary School, 107 Ivy Street, Newark, New Jersey. Constructed in 1931. Source: Google 2021.

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Supplemental Figure 6. Newark Public School of Fine and Industrial Art, 550 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Newark, New Jersey. Designed by Guilbert & Betelle, completed in 1931. Source: Google 2023.

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Supplemental Figure 7. Public School No. 36 (later renamed A. Harry Moore School), 2078 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. Constructed in 1931. Source: Google 2021.

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Supplemental Figure 8. Willow Street Elementary School (later renamed Viola L. Sickles Elementary School), 25 Willow Street, Fair Haven, New Jersey. Designed by J. Robert Pierson & Son, completed in 1935. Source: Google 2011.

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Supplemental Figure 9: Ulysses S. Grant Elementary School, today known as Grant Intermediate School, 159 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey. Constructed in 1938. Source: Google 2014.

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Supplemental Figure 10. Parker Public School, 820 S Warren Street, Trenton, New Jersey. Built in 1938. Source: www.homes.com. 2023.

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Supplemental Figure 11. Public School No. 5, 430 Totowa Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey. Constructed in 1939. Source: Google 2014.

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Supplemental Figure 12. Bloomfield Junior High School, 177 Franklin Street, Bloomfield, New Jersey. Constructed in 1939. Source: www.apartments.com. 2023

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Supplemental Figure 13. Paul Robeson Elementary School, later renamed Hedgepeth–Williams Intermediate School, 301 Gladstone Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey. Constructed in 1943. Source: Google 2021.

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Supplemental Figure 14. Dayton Street School, *circa* 1954, 226 Dayton Street, Newark, New Jersey. Designed by Frederick Cook, completed in 1949. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Supplemental Figure 15. "Jersey Homesteads" mural (left) and mural detail (right) by Ben Shahn, *circa* 1936-1937. Community Center of Jersey Homesteads, New Jersey (currently the Roosevelt Public School, Roosevelt, New Jersey). Photographed by Arthur Rothstein, 1938. Source: Library of Congress.

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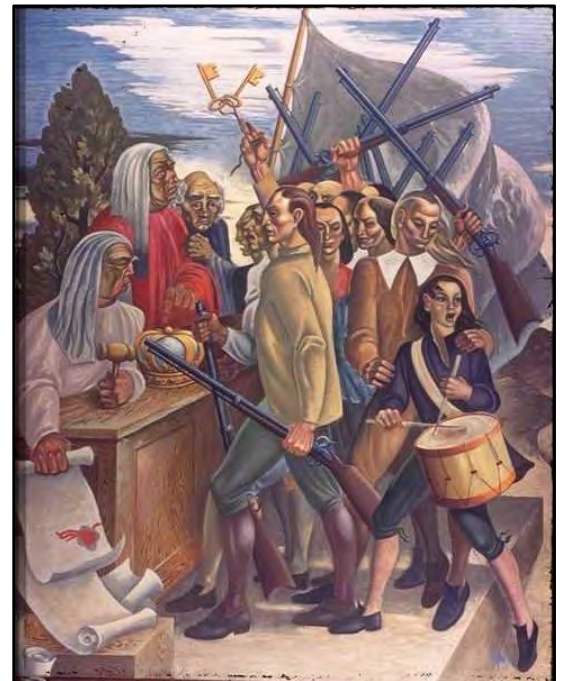
Supplemental Figure 16. Colin Unwin Gill. "Heavy Artillery." 1919. Michael Lenson studied under Gill at the Slade School of Art in London during the 1920s. Lenson's "The Enlightenment of Man" clearly reflects the influence that Gill had on Lenson's development as an artist. Source: Imperial War Museum.

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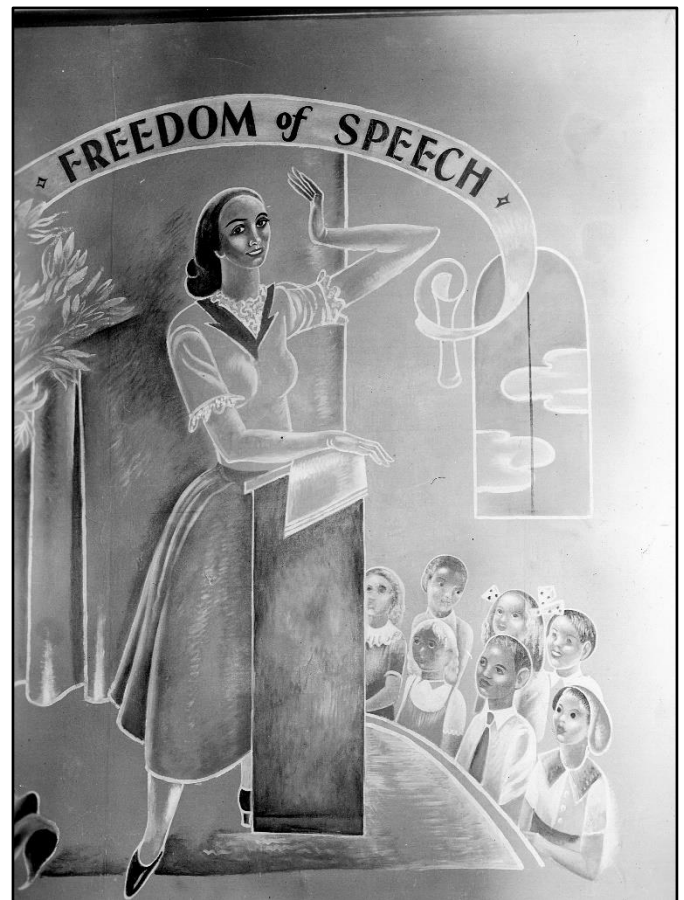
Supplemental Figure 17. Left: Michael Lenson. "History of Newark" mural panels. *Circa* 1941. Municipal Council Chamber, Newark City Hall. Source: Rozewski and Hemmerly, Newark City Hall, National Register Nomination Registration Form [NRIS# 78001759], 1977. Right: "History of Newark," far right panel in left image. Source: Lenson 2020.

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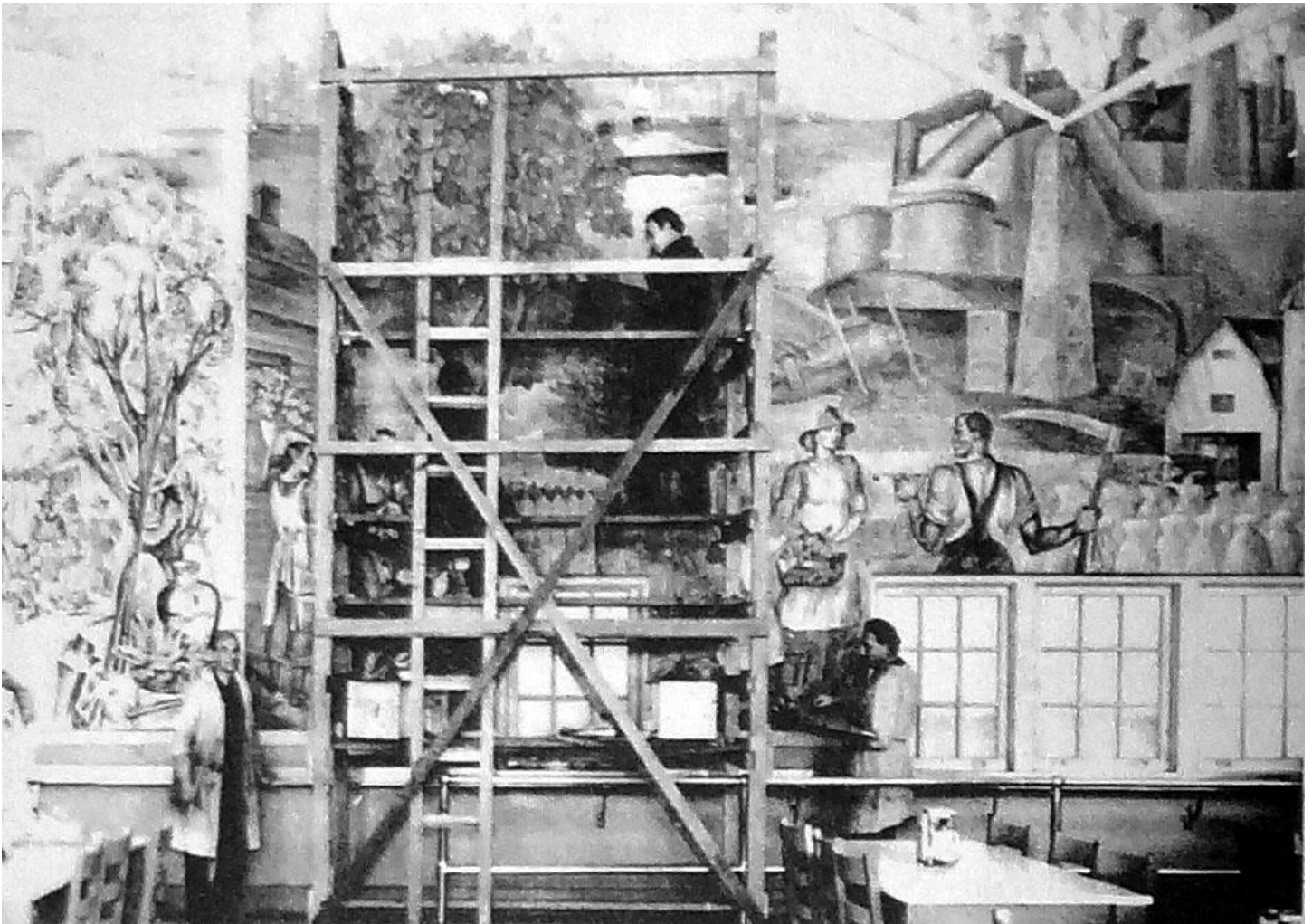
Supplemental Figure 18. Michael Lenson. Two of the four sections of "The Four Freedoms" mural. *Circa* 1942. The mural is located in the art department, Fourteenth Avenue School in Newark. Other sections include "Freedom from Want" and "Freedom to Worship." Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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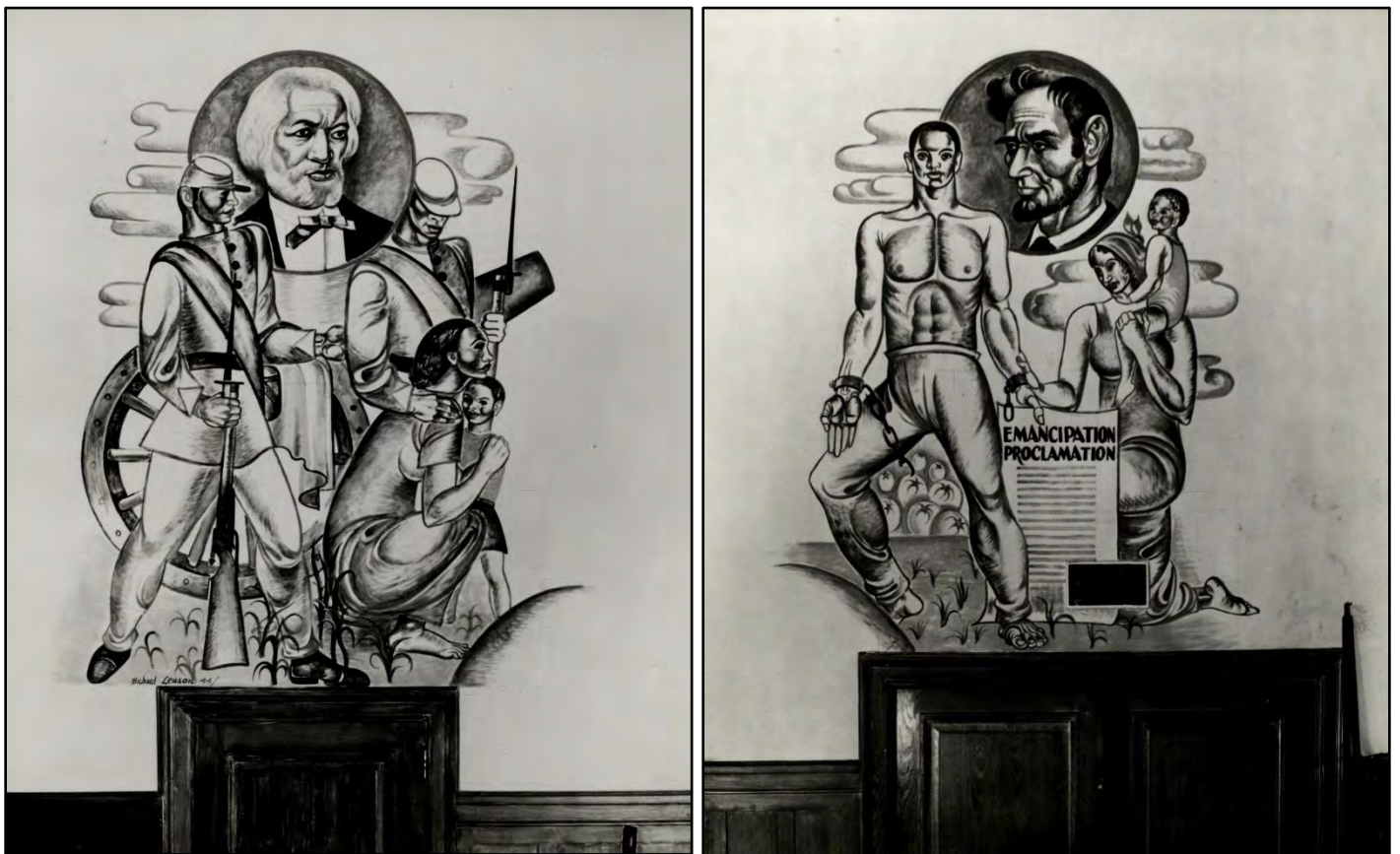
Supplemental Figure 19. Michael Lenson. "History of New Jersey" mural. *Circa 1936-37 (non-extant)*. The mural was located in the dining hall of the Essex Mountain Sanatorium. Source: The Living New Deal, 2023.

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Supplemental Figure 20. Michael Lenson. "Emancipation Proclamation." Circa 1944 (non-extant). Left and right side of auditorium stage, Charlton Street School, Newark. Photographed by O'Sullivan. Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Supplemental Figure 21. Michael Lenson. Mural of weather and astronomy subject in the Chancellor Avenue Elementary School, Newark. *Circa* 1943 (non-extant). Source: Newark Schools Collection, Newark Public Library.

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Supplemental Figure 22. Michael Lenson. "Mining/" Circa 1942. Located in the Mount Hope Post Office, Mount Hope, West Virginia. Photographed by Jimmy Emerson. Source: The Living New Deal.

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Appendix 1: Schools Designed by Guilbert and Betelle

The following list is compiled from sources including *The American Architect*, *The American School Board Journal*, *Architecture*, and *The Newark Public Schools Chronology and School Buildings*. This list may be incomplete and attribution should be verified based on original sources such as plans, when possible.

Projects for the Newark Board of Education

This list includes only new building construction during the active years of the Guilbert and Betelle firm between 1910 and 1939. It excludes additions to existing buildings. Since Ernest F. Guilbert and James O. Betelle each served individually as the appointed supervising architect of the Newark Board of Education, there has been a tendency in past lists to conflate projects they may have supervised with those where their firm actually undertook the design. Buildings where Guilbert and Betelle are known to have only had a supervisory role are not included in the list. A date of completion and architectural style is provided when known.

1. East Side Commercial and Manual Training High School, 1911 (Georgian Revival)
2. Ridge Street School, 1911 – (Flemish Revival)
3. Peshine Avenue Elementary School, 1911 – (Late Renaissance Revival)
4. Montgomery Street Elementary School, 1911 – (Neoclassical)
5. Central Commercial & Manual Training High School, 1912 (Gothic Revival)
6. Cleveland Elementary School, 1912 (Georgian Revival)
7. Newark Normal School (Technology High), 1913 (Tudor Revival)
8. South Side High School (Malcolm X. Shabazz High School), 1913 (Gothic Revival)
9. Maple Ave School, 1924 (Georgian Revival)
10. Arlington Ave School, 1925
11. West Side High School, 1926 (Georgian Revival)
12. First Avenue School, 1929 (Gothic Revival)
13. Essex County Girls Vocational School, 1930 (Art Deco)
14. Newark School of Fine & Industrial Arts (Arts High School), 1931 (Art Deco)
15. Weequahic High School, 1933 (Art Deco)

Projects in New Jersey, outside of Newark

1. East Orange High School, East Orange, 1911 (Tudor Revival)
2. Kearny High School, Kearny, *circa* 1921-23 (Neoclassical)
3. Marshall Elementary School, South Orange, 1922 (Tudor Revival)
4. West Orange High School, West Orange, 1922 (Gothic Revival)
5. Summit High School, Summit, 1922-23 (Gothic Revival)
6. State Normal School (Rowan University), Glassboro, 1923 (Colonial Revival)
7. Tuscan Elementary, Maplewood, *circa* 1924 (Tudor Revival)
8. Columbia High School, South Orange, *circa* 1927 (Gothic Revival)
9. Vineland High School, Vineland, 1927 (Gothic Revival)

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10. Franklin School, Summit, *circa* 1927 (Tudor Revival)
11. Thomas A. Edison Jr. High School, Vineland, *circa* 1927
12. Clinton Elementary School, Maplewood, *circa* 1929 (Colonial Revival)
13. Radburn Elementary School, Fair Lawn, *circa* 1929
14. South Mountain Elementary, South Orange, *circa* 1930 (Tudor Revival)
15. State Normal School, Chapin and Morehead Halls (Montclair State University), Montclair, *circa* 1930 (Spanish Revival)
16. Maplewood Junior High, Maplewood, *circa* 1930 (Colonial Revival)
17. Vernon L. Davey Junior High School, East Orange, *circa* 1930 (Colonial Revival)
18. Essex County Boys Vocational School, Bloomfield, *circa* 1931
19. Jefferson Elementary School, Summit, *circa* 1931 (Colonial Revival)

Connecticut

1. Cos Cob School, Greenwich, *circa* 1915 (Georgian Revival)
2. Glenville School, Greenwich, *circa* 1921 (Colonial Revival)
3. State Normal School (Central Connecticut State University), New Britain, *circa* 1922 (Colonial Revival)
4. Greenwich High School, *circa* 1925 (Colonial Revival)

Delaware

Guilbert & Betelle prepared plans that were used to build over 125 schools that were donated to the State of Delaware by industrialist Pierre S. DuPont. Approximately two-thirds were segregated schools for Black children in rural areas. The plans appear to have been standard or model drawings of buildings with one, two or perhaps as many as four classrooms. In addition, the firm completed two large public schools in the City of Wilmington.

1. Charles B. Lore Elementary School, Wilmington, *circa* 1923 (Tudor Revival)
2. Howard High School, Wilmington, *circa* 1927 (Georgian Revival)

New York

1. Washington Irving School, Tarrytown, *circa* 1925 (Colonial Revival)
2. Great Neck High School, Great Neck, Long Island, *circa* 1926 (Colonial Revival)
3. New Rochelle High School, New Rochelle, *circa* 1926 (French Gothic Revival)
4. Bronxville School, in collaboration with Harry Leslie Walker, Bronxville, *circa* 1930 (Tudor Revival).

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National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Weequahic High School
Essex County, New Jersey

Section number Appendix 1 Page 3

Pennsylvania

1. Science Hall, Lincoln University, Oxford, *circa* 1925
2. Thaddeus Stevens Jr. High School, Williamsport, *circa* 1927 (Gothic Revival)













WEEQUAHIC
HIGH SCHOOL
MCMXXXII

WEEQUAHIC HIGH SCHOOL





















AUDITORIUM

NO FOOD OR
DRINKS
ALLOWED

ISOLATION ROOM
→

WHEELABEE
HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEMBER LIST
1990-2000

WHEELABEE
High School

RELOCATION OF
CLASSROOMS
TUES MARCH 15TH
WED MARCH 16TH







W E E O U A H I C



W E E Q U A H I C









We Proudly Compost & Recycle

STATION ONE
Compostable Food
Only
No Plates & Cups

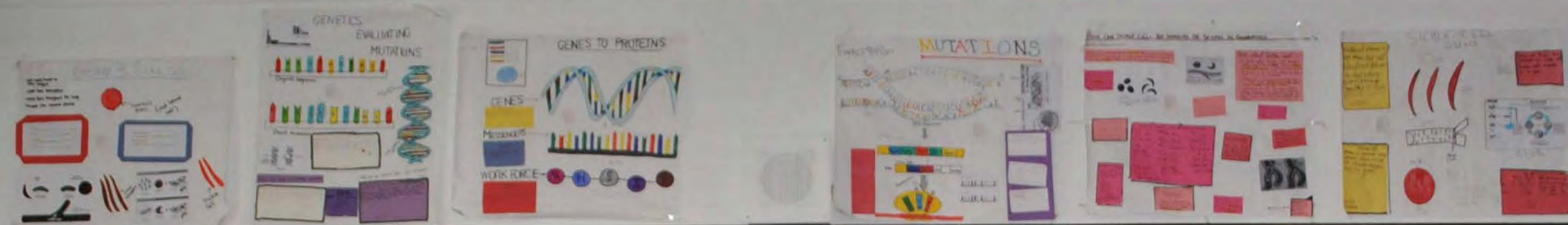
STATION TWO
Recycling Only
No Paper, Plastic or Glass

STATION THREE
Recycling Only
No Paper, Plastic or Glass

STATION FOUR
Recycling Only
No Paper, Plastic or Glass

EXIT





GROUP TASKS	LEADER	SUPPLY MANAGER	TIMER	SCRIBE	PRESENTER
1. The Check Systems	2. Grading Rubric	3. Show Your Pride!!	4. Essential Questions: Heart Disease	5. Instructional Matrix	6. Lesson Plans

The Check Systems

✓ = 100% - 90%
✓ = 80% - 70%
✓ = 60% - 50%

Grading Rubric

Tests = 65%
Classwork = 25%
Homework = 10%

Show Your Pride!!

Essential Questions: Heart Disease

- How do the cardiovascular & respiratory system work together to maintain homeostasis in the body?
- What is the relationship between structure and function within systems, organs, & tissues in the human body?
- How can technology be used to collect & analyze cardiovascular data?
- What do heart rate, blood pressure, & EKG data reveal about the heart's health?
- How can a person decrease their risk for heart attack or stroke?

Instructional Matrix

Learning Intentions: We are discovering why heart disease is prevalent in specific cultures.

Success Criteria: I can explain the health lifestyle choices that lead to heart disease.

Standards: 9.3.HL.5

Instructional Tasks: See assignments in work folder.







50th Anniversary
1972-2022
Newark Public Schools
Celebrating 50 Years

NEWARK HITS THE BRICKS FOR EDUCATION
2022 COLLEGE FAIR
SCIENCE PARK HIGH SCHOOL
150 Norfolk St, Newark, NJ 07103
APRIL 19 & APRIL 20 10 AM TO 5 PM

OVER 15 NEW JERSEY INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING:

- COLLEGES
- UNIVERSITIES
- TRADE SCHOOLS
- VOCATIONAL

SESSIONS ON:

- HOW TO INCREASE SAT & ACT SCORES
- FINANCIAL AID
- PROCESS/APPLY
- SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



Board of Education News

WARNING - NOT FOR PRIVATE USE
MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THEFT OR MISUSE OF POSTAL PROPERTY
\$1,000 FINE AND 3 YEARS IMPRISONMENT (18 USC 1707)
UNITED STATES
MAIL SERVICE


STOP
AUTHORIZED
PERSONNEL
ONLY

50th

NOT
IN
SERVICE













Michael Brown / 39











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination	
Property Name:	Weequahic High School	
Multiple Name:		
State & County:	NEW JERSEY, Essex	

Date Received: 2/26/2024 Date of Pending List: 3/12/2024 Date of 16th Day: 3/27/2024 Date of 45th Day: 4/11/2024 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:	SG100010170
Nominator:	SHPO
Reason For Review:	

 X Accept Return Reject 4/11/2024 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:	AOS: Art, Architecture; POS: 1932-1958; LOS: Local. Weequahic High School is locally significant in the area of architecture for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco architectural style as applied to a large urban public high school. It was built in 1932-33 to a design prepared by Guilbert and Betelle, a Newark, New Jersey-based architectural firm that specialized in academic architecture. Among the building's significant character-defining features are its floor plan and spatial organization. It incorporates a central auditorium large enough for the entire student population; two gymnasiums for classes that could be segregated by gender; administrative offices near the main entrance with an original master clock and bells; 125 classrooms with ordinary classrooms of 20 feet by 24 feet (considered ideal for pedagogical reasons of promoting student/teacher interactions) and larger specialized classrooms and labs for the sciences, arts and music; terra-cotta tiled corridors for ease of cleaning; rectangular-plan hallways with corner stairs to promote circulation and sufficient space for every student to have an individual locker, and classrooms arranged around the perimeter of two central light wells for natural light and ventilation. Among the Art Deco character-defining stylistic features are a strong geometrical façade with a series of setbacks creating a central, stepped, ziggurat outline; fluted pilasters and stairwells with stacked windows to emphasize verticality; decorative elements in low-relief featuring artistic motifs and geometric forms; decorative window spandrels and grilles; and stylized interior décor such as pendant lighting and decorative metal ventilation grilles. Weequahic High School is among the most architecturally outstanding of seven Art Deco public schools built by the Newark Board of Education from 1928 to 1933. Additionally, Weequahic High School has local significance in the area of art for Michael Lenson's mural, "The Enlightenment of Man," a New Deal's Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) Federal Arts Project. The mural was created specifically for the lobby in 1939 and is an important example in Newark of the American scene movement and social realism, which is closely associated with the W.P.A. muralists. This style of mural is defined in part by depictions of human figures acting out everyday activities. The subject matter of "The Enlightenment of Man," also befitting this genre, is an artistic expression of concern about the potential for scientific progress to be used against humanity, as witnessed throughout history.
Recommendation/ Criteria	NR Criterion: C.

Reviewer Lisa Deline

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239

Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

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Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420
Tel. (609) 633-0700 • Fax (609) 633-1421
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

SHAWN M. LATOURETTE
Commissioner

February 21, 2024

Ms. Joy Beasley
Keeper, National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Mail Stop 7228
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

The accompanying .pdf's contain the true and correct copy of a nomination for Weequahic High School, located in Essex County, New Jersey.

This nomination has received unanimous approval from the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites. All procedures were followed in accordance with regulations published in the Federal Register. No objections were received during the public comment period. The property being nominated is not located in a Certified Local Government community. This property is not using Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits. This submission was not funded by an NPS Grant.

Should you want any further information concerning this nomination, please feel free to contact Katherine J. Marcopul, Administrator, New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Mail Code 501-04B, P.O. Box 420, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420, or call/text her at (609) 422-6383.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Dragon
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer